TERROR TALES

pdc

MAY
1971
50¢

FEATURING:
THE STRANGE HORROR OF
THE WOODEN MENACE

THE CHILLING FEAR OF
THE EVIL ONES

PLUS
OTHER
SHOCKING
TALES OF
TERROR

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TERROR TALES

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The personal horror of a puppetmaster who could make his puppets do everything except breathe. You're nothing but a chunk of wood! Put that knife down! N-not in me, you dope! Y-ye-ech!

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Weird are those who haunt the docks and then step into an evil horror that kills. Aw, you're kidding . . . Hey, stop! Ugh!

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Phantoms and demons are not always stone-cold dead. They can return from the grave! Aha, a disbeliever, eh? Well, read on.

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The devil always collects his debts as Reed Canning found out when his own body came due. Come on, Reed, the weather is always warm down here!

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Mason hated the slimy creatures that crawled on his island, and one day fell prey to the deadliest of them all. My, what big fangs you have! Help!

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The fates laughed as McCoy spun a web of destruction that ended with the terrifying screams of three people at a kitchen table. Cream, anyone?

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The beat of voodoo drums explodes with horror as the dead rise from their graves and walk. Daughter, THIS you want to MARRY? Ugh!

CARL BURGOS, Editor IRVING FASS, Art Director
EZRA JACKSON, Art Editor

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THE WOODEN MENACE

GREAT PUPPET SHOW

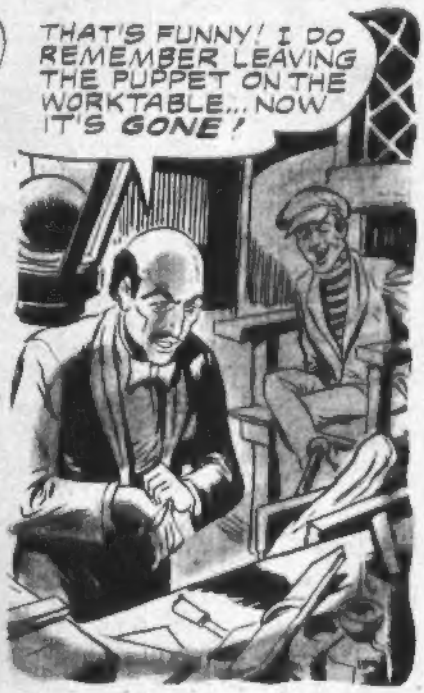
PETER LUCAS, THE FAMOUS PUPPETMASTER COULD MAKE HIS PUPPETS DO EVERYTHING BUT BREATHE! IN FACT, HIS PUPPETRY HAD REACHED SUCH A PINNACLE OF ART, THAT ONLY LIFE ITSELF REMAINED UNATTAINABLE... OR **WAS** IT???

AND THUS ENDS ANOTHER FASCINATING PUPPET SHOW WRITTEN, DIRECTED AND ENACTED BY THE ONE AND ONLY PETER LUCAS!
PIP! PIP! HOORAY! HOORAY FOR PETER LUCAS!
BRAVO!

WHAT IS TO BE YOUR NEXT ENGAGEMENT, MR. LUCAS?
MY SHOW FOR SCOTLAND YARD, WHERE I HOPE TO SPRING A REAL SURPRISE FOR OUR POLICE FORCE!

"LATER, WHEN LUCAS REACHED HIS LONDON FLAT...
IT WAS A WONDERFUL SHOW, MR. LUCAS!
THANK YOU, MRS. BRUDGE! I AM NOT TO BE DISTURBED NOW-- BY ANYONE! I MUST CONCENTRATE!

WHO IN BLAZES DOES 'E THINK 'E IS? GOIN' MAD IN THAT WORKSHOP OF 'IS... LIVIN WITH 'IS BLASTED PUPPETS!
SHHH, EDGAR! 'E'LL 'EAR YOU!


THAT'S FUNNY! I DO REMEMBER LEAVING THE PUPPET ON THE WORKTABLE... NOW IT'S GONE!

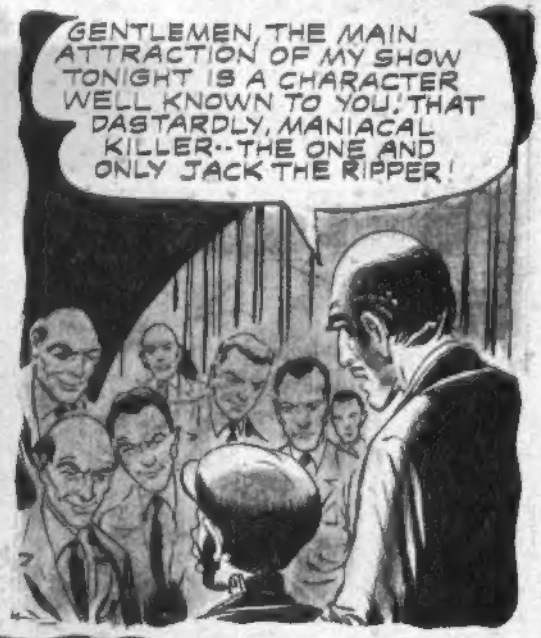
HERE IT IS ON THIS CHAIR! MRS. BRUDGE MUST'VE BEEN UP TO HER PRYING AGAIN! PLAYED WITH THE PUPPET AND STUPID ENOUGH NOT TO PUT IT BACK WHERE SHE FOUND IT

MRS. BRUDGE... MRS. BRUDGE...

WHAT DO YOU MEAN BY MONKEYING AROUND WITH MY PUPPETS? I TOLD YOU A MILLION TIMES NOBODY IS TO COME UP HERE!
BUT, I DIDN'T GO UPSTAIRS, MR. LUCAS! YOU EVEN CHANGED THE LOCK ON YOUR DOOR! NOBODY BUT YOU HAS THE KEY!
T-THAT'S TRUE! AND YET, SOMEBODY MUST HAVE MOVED THE PUPPET!
(GASP) HE'S ON THE WORKTABLE AGAIN! D-DID I IMAGINE HE WAS ON THE CHAIR?
IT MUST BE OVERWORK...NERVOUSNESS! I-I SEE THINGS THAT AREN'T THERE!
IN THIS PUPPET, I WANT TO REINCARNATE ENGLAND'S INFAMOUS MURDERER--JACK THE RIPPER! HE MUST SHOCK THOSE SCOTLAND YARD BOYS AT THE BENEFIT!
YEOWW! MY LEG
THE PUPPET--HE STABBED ME WITH THE SCISSORS! I MUST'VE TOUCHED SOME WIRES AND BROUGHT ABOUT A MECHANICAL REFLEX!

I COULD SWEAR THERE'S A GLEAM OF SATISFACTION IN HIS EYES... AS IF HE ENJOYED STABBING ME!
LUCAS SPIES SHOP

SPECIAL PERFORMANCE FOR SCOTLAND YARD
featuring the GREAT LUCAS


GENTLEMEN, THE MAIN ATTRACTION OF MY SHOW TONIGHT IS A CHARACTER WELL KNOWN TO YOU! THAT DASTARDLY, MANIACAL KILLER--THE ONE AND ONLY JACK THE RIPPER!

I WILL SHOW YOU TONIGHT HOW JACK THE RIPPER ACCOMPLISHED HIS HEINOUS MURDERS! AND NOW, JACK THE RIPPER SPEAKS FOR HIMSELF!

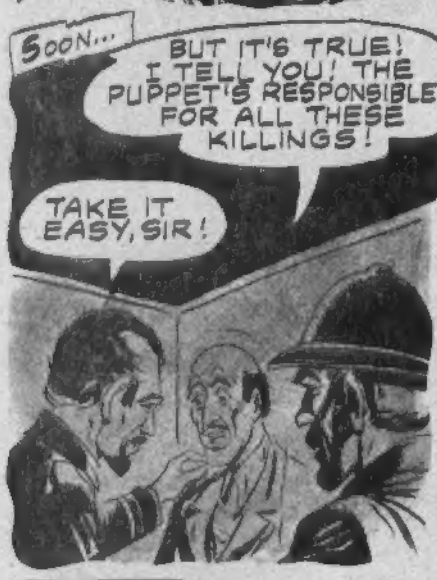
AH! A PRETTY UNESCORTED MAIDEN! PREPARE TO DIE, MY PRETTY, FOR YOU HAVE COME FACE TO FACE WITH JACK THE RIPPER!

ALL MUST PERISH! YOUNG AND OLD!

ENOUGH! THIS IS IN BAD TASTE! THEY MOCK US!
LUCAS MUST BE MENTALLY SICK TO PUT ON A PERFORMANCE LIKE THIS!

THE PUPPET IS MOVING WITHOUT THE BENEFIT OF MY WIRE PULLING! THOSE ARE HIS WORDS, NOT MINE! HE'S GONE BERSERK--ON HIS OWN!
NOBODY CAN CATCH ME! I'M TOO CLEVER!
TAKE HIM OFF!
THEY DON'T UNDERSTAND I'M ALIVE, EH, PUPPET-MAKER? BUT WE SHALL PRETEND ONCE MORE THAT YOU CONTROL ME!
STOP THE SHOW!
I BEG YOUR PARDON FOR ANY OFFENSE I MAY HAVE GIVEN! WE WILL CONTINUE WITH THE ROMANCE OF ROMEO AND JULIET!
FOR A MOMENT, LUCAS, WE THOUGHT YOU HAD LOST YOUR MIND!
LATER, IN LUCAS' DRESSING ROOM...
IT'S A PARANOIC TENDENCY! IT COMES OVER MANY ARTISTS... THE DESIRE TO WIELD RUTHLESS POWER!
THEY THINK YOUR MIND SNAPPED, LUCAS! BUT WE KNOW THE TRUTH, EH? HEH--HEH!
AN HOUR LATER, IN LUCAS' WORKSHOP..
NOW I'M GOING TO TAKE YOU APART, PIECE BY PIECE, AND SEE WHERE I MADE MY MISTAKE!
I SHALL NOT REST UNTIL I HAVE KILLED IN REALITY!
OHH! YOU MURDERING LITTLE DEVIL! Y-YOU'VE STABBED ME!
NOW I'LL PULL A FEW TRICKS OF MY OWN!
COME BACK!
FROM TONIGHT FORWARD, AT THE SCENE OF EVERY JACK THE RIPPER MURDER, ANOTHER CORPSE WILL BE FOUND, VICTIMS OF THE PUPPET YOU BROUGHT TO LIFE!

MR. LUCAS! WE 'ERD YOU SCREAMIN' AND RUNNIN' AROUND UPSTAIRS! IS SOMETHING WR... OWWW!
OUT OF MY WAY! MY PUPPET ESCAPED! HE'S GOING TO REPEAT THE JACK THE RIPPER MURDERS! I'VE GOT TO STOP HIM!
'IS PUPPET ESCAPED?
I TOLD YOU 'E WAS OFF 'IS CROCK!
LATER...
ALL WE HEARD WAS A SCREAM AND THEN WE FOUND HIM LIKE THIS... HIS THROAT CUT!
GIVES ME THE SHIVERS! IT'S LIKE THE FIRST MURDER JACK THE RIPPER COMMITTED! RIGHT HERE IN THE SAME DOORWAY!
LUCAS! NOTHING CAN STOP ME! WHO'D BELIEVE THAT A PUPPET COULD KILL? HEH! HEH! READ THE PAPERS! THEIR BLOOD IS ON YOUR HANDS!
NO! NO! NO!
HOURS LATER, LUCAS RETURNED FROM A WEARY NIGHT'S SEARCH!
H-HE'S HERE AGAIN! CAN IT BE A DREAM... HIS NOCTURNAL COMING AND GOING?
GOT YOU BAFFLED, EH? GOOD!
I'M NOT LIKE YOU, REQUIRING SLEEP AND REST! FALL ASLEEP, LUCAS AND SEE WHAT HAPPENS!
THINGS LIKE THIS CAN'T HAPPEN!
BUT THEY DID HAPPEN, OR SO IT SEEMED TO LUCAS...
I'M BACK FROM THE HUNT! YOUNG GIRL THIS TIME! SHE SCREAMED SO SWEETLY!



YES, WHO KNOWS? WAS ALL THIS HORROR MERELY IN THE TWISTED BRAIN OF THE PUPPET-MASTER? IT ALL SEEMED SO REAL TO PETER LUCAS, BUT PERHAPS HE WAS JUST A RAVING LUNATIC, PROJECTING HIS OWN, SPLIT PERSONALITY TO HIS PUPPET CREATION AND IMAGINED IT LIVED!

THE END

STRANGE AND UNHOLY ARE THOSE WHO HAUNT THE DOCKS... AS STRANGE AS THE SHADOWY SLUMS THROUGH WHICH THEY WANDER! AND AMONG THEM THERE IS ALWAYS ONE WHO WOULD GIVE HIS SOUL TO BE KING OF THE WATERFRONT!

THE EVIL ONES

AS "SLASH" CARVER, BOSS OF THE WATERFRONT CONFERS WITH HIS BOYS, BENNY APPROACHES...

WHY, YOU CRUMMY LITTLE JERK! GET AWAY FROM ME!
AWRIGHT, SLASH... I WAS ONLY ASKIN'!
HAW-HAW! YELLOW BELLY BENNY WANTS TO BE A BIG SHOT!

WHAT I'D GIVE TO BE KING OF THE WATERFRONT! I'D SHOW HIM! BOY, I'D GIVE ANYTHING!

WOULD YOU, BENNY?
HUH? HEY, I DIDN'T SAY... HOW'D YOU KNOW WHAT I...?

I COULD HELP YOU, BENNY GLIP! I COULD MAKE YOU ANYTHING YOU WANT TO BE, BUT YOU WILL HAVE TO PROVE YOURSELF FIRST BY KILLING SOMEONE!
K-KILL SOME...? B-BUT I COULDN'T!

YES YOU COULD! YOU RE JUST AS BIG AS ANYBODY ELSE AROUND HERE!
SURE, SARRA... SURE I AM! I COULD KNOCK OFF A GUY JUST LIKE SLASH DOES OR ANY OF 'EM! WHO DO I KILL?

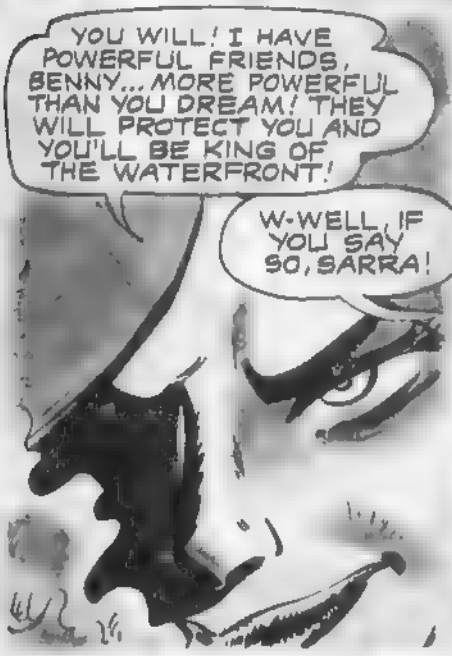
I'LL TELL YOU LATER! GO TO MY ROOM AND WAIT!
OKAY, SARRA!
TIME TO GET GOIN' BOYS!

HEY, SARRA! YA BEEN HIDIN' OUT ON ME LATELY, HONEY?
I'M HERE, NOW, SLASH! WHY NOT DROP UP TO MY PLACE LATER TONIGHT!

SWE..L, BABY...SOON AS THE BOYS AN ME DO A LITTLE JOB! SEE YOU LATER!
THE BOSS IS SURE NUTS ABOUT THAT DAME! SHE GIVES ME THE CREEPS!

ME TOO! THAT DAME SPELLS BAD TROUBLE!
IF ALL GOES WELL, MY WORK SHOULD BE DONE SOON! THE BLACK ONES WILL BE VERY PLEASED TONIGHT!

MINUTES LATER, IN SARRA'S ROOM OVER-HANGING THE HARBOR...
NOW, BENNY, LISTEN TO ME...SLASH CARVER WILL BE HERE SOON ALONE! YOU ARE GOING TO KILL HIM!
N-NOT SLASH, SARRA! I--I'M SCARED OF 'IM! I--I...


YOU WILL! I HAVE POWERFUL FRIENDS, BENNY... MORE POWERFUL THAN YOU DREAM! THEY WILL PROTECT YOU AND YOU'LL BE KING OF THE WATERFRONT!
W-WELL, IF YOU SAY SO, SARRA!

HIDE ON THE BALCONY, AND WHEN SLASH COMES ...YOU KNOW WHAT TO DO!
THEN, I'LL BE THE B G BOSS, HUH? I'LL FIX HIM ALRIGHT, DON'T WORRY!

MEANWHILE, IN THE SHADOWS OF THE DOCKS...
THERE'S OUR CAPTAIN, BOYS! LET'S GET THAT PEARL NOW!
YOU SURE ARE HANDY WITH THAT KNIFE, BOSS!

BUT ME, I LIKE THE WAY A GAT WORKS!
YEAH... LIKE THIS!

WHAT THE... UGGGH!
OHHHHHHH!

I GOT TH' PEARL! I'LL MEET YA BACK AT THE CLIP JOINT, BOYS! DUMP ALL THREE OF 'EM INTO THE BAY!
YOU DIRTY... OHHHH-H!

BUT AS SLASH RACES FROM THE MURDER SCENE...
WHAT'S THE HURRY, SLASH? RUNNING TO KEEP YOUR DATE WITH ME?
SARRA! LOOK, HONEY, I GOTTA MEET THE BOYS FIRST, AN'...

BUT SARRA IS LONESOME, AND IF YOU DON'T COME TO SARRA'S PLACE NOW...SARRA WILL NOT BE THERE WHEN YOU DO!
DON'T GET SORE, BABY! I'LL COME!

And SO, THE KING OF THE WATERFRONT DOUBLE-CROSSES HIS FRIENDS FOR A WOMAN...
I'M NUTS ABOUT YA, SARRA! YA WANT THE PEARL? I'LL GIVE IT TO YA! I'LL...
IT IS NOT THE PEARL I WANT, POOR FOOL...
...IT'S YOUR LIFE!
WHA...? AAAGGHHH!
WELL DONE, BENNY GLIP! NOW, SIT THERE AT THE TABLE, QUICKLY, WHILE I CALL MY FRIENDS!
C-COULDN'T WE GET RID OF--OF--?
COME, OH, EVIL ONES! COME MY UNDEAD ANCESTORS WHO WALK THE EARTH IN DARKNESS! THIS MAN HAS KILLED FOR US! COME TO HIM, ALL POWERFUL SPIRITS!
S-SARRA! W-WHAT ARE YOU SAYING?
WE ARE HERE MURDEROUS ONE TO MAKE YOU WHAT YOU DESIRE TO BE! BUT FIRST... YOU MUST PROMISE TO JOIN US AT THE MOMENT OF YOUR EARTHLY DEATH!
DON'T TOUCH ME, YOU DEVILS!
ANSWER US, QUICKLY! WILL YOU WALK THE EARTH WITH US AFTER DEATH?
YES, YES, ANYTHING! GET THEM AWAY FROM ME, SARRA!
TERRORIZED, BENNY FAINTS...
THEN, FOR THE REST OF YOUR LIFE... YOU ARE KING OF THE WATERFRONT! BUT WE WILL BE WAITING FOR YOU!!
I'M KING OF... OHH-H...

MOMENTS LATER, A BODY PLUNGES INTO THE PITCH-BLACK WATER BELOW, AND...
GOOD RIDDANCE, MY FRIEND! YOU'VE SERVED YOUR PURPOSE! AH, HERE THEY ARE!

...AND MY WORK IS DONE! BENNY! BENNY, WAKE UP!
OPEN UP, SLASH! WE KNOW YER THERE!
HUH? WHA...?

AWRIGHT, WE'LL BREAK IT IN!
WHAT--WHAT'S GOIN' ON HERE...WHAT ARE THEM HORRIBLE...??

WHAT DID I TELL YA? THERE'S THE PEARL! TH' LOUSE WAS GONNA GIVE IT TO THE DAME!
WHAT ARE YA TALKIN' ABOUT? I GOT NOTHIN' TO DO WITH NO PEARL!! SARRA...!

SARRA! TELL 'EM I DIDN'T... SARRA!! YOU-- YOU'RE ONE OF THEM!
MY WORK IS DONE! BUT WE WILL MEET AGAIN! HA-HA-HA!
WHO'S HE TALKIN' TO? IS HE BATS... I DON'T SEE NOBODY!

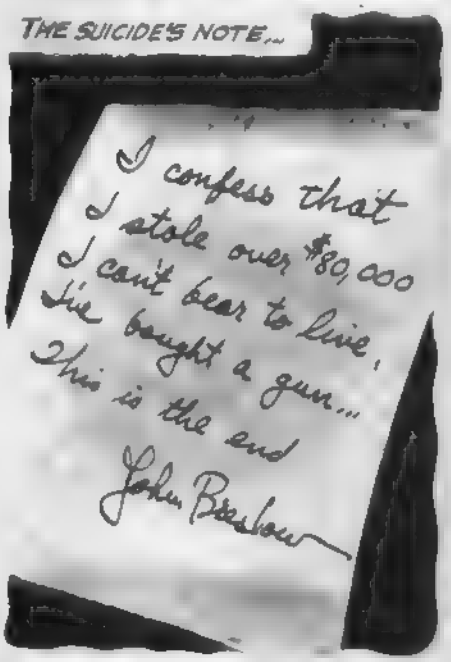
C'MON, LET'S GIVE IT TO THE DOUBLECROSSER!
DON'T IT'S A MISTAKE! I NEVER CROSSED YOU GUYS! PLEASE DON'T K-KILL ME!

And AS HIS GLAZING EYES STARE INTO THE WATER BELOW, A VOICE OF DOOM REPEATS IN HIS DYING BRAIN: "WE WILL BE WAITING FOR YOU!"

THE END

DEATH AND PHANTOMS ARE NOT ALWAYS AS COLD AS ICE...THEY **CAN** BE AS RED-HOT AS FLAME! WHEN A LIVING MAN IS ELECTROCUTED, OR "BURNED"... HE **CAN** RETURN AS A RAGING INFERNO OF RED-HOT REVENGE THAT EATS ENEMIES AND KILLERS IN THE BLASTING HATE OF---

FIRE MONSTER


THE SUICIDE'S NOTE...
I confess that I stole over $80,000 I can't bear to live, I've bought a gun... This is the end
John Brabson

INTO THREE EVIL MINDS THE SAME EVIL PLAN IS BORN...
DO SOMETHING, YOU FOOLS! CALL THE POLICE!
WE COULD DESTROY THE NOTE...
AND THE LAW WOULD KILL HIM FOR US! HA-HA!
BLAME THE THEFT AND THE "MURDER" ON HIM...

THE FIRST STEP IS TO DESTORY THIS NOTE...LIKE THIS!
YOU DOLTISH FOOL! THAT'S EVIDENCE!

WITH THREE CRIMINAL BRAINS THINKING AS ONE, THEIR MURDER PLAN IS COMPLETE!
WE SAW YOU KILL THE CASHIER! YOU STOLE THAT MONEY!
YOUR FINGERPRINTS ARE ON THIS GUN-- YOU MURDERER!

The POLICE ARE CALLED---
I DIDN'T KILL HIM! I'M INNOCENT! THE SUICIDE NOTE.. IT'S IN THE FIRE!
YOU THREE SAW THE KILLING? THAT SETTLES IT!
HA-HA! THE ASHES OF THAT NOTE HAVE GONE UP THE CHIMNEY!

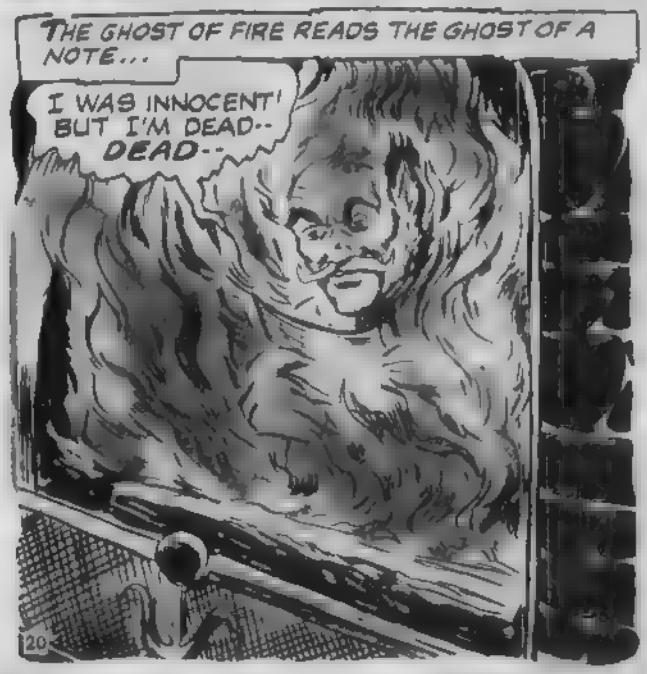
And IN COURT...TWO MONTHS LATER...
LIES! ALL LIES!
HE KILLED THE CASHIER!
GUILTY! I SENTENCE YOU TO DIE IN THE ELECTRIC CHAIR!

IN THE STATE'S PRISON A MONTH LATER...
I'LL HAVE MY REVENGE! REVENGE!

AS THE BLASTING HEAT OF ELECTROCUTION DIVIDES BODY AND SOUL--A GHOST IS BORN! A GHOST OF FIRE!
AND I'LL GET REVENGE! I'LL KILL! KILL!
THE DOCTOR CAN NOW PRONOUNCE THIS MAN DEAD--

I FELT A CHILL OF EVIL...BUT IT FELT LIKE A HOT FLAME!
HA-HA! NO ONE CAN ACTUALLY SEE ME...I CAN DO ANYTHING!

THE PARTNERS-IN-CRIME DO NOT BELIEVE IN GHOSTS...
HE'S DEAD! HE'LL NEVER BOTHER US AGAIN!
WE'RE RICH! THE FIRM IS OURS!
S-A-A-Y-- ISN'T THAT FIRE GETTING HOT?


THE GHOST OF FIRE READS THE GHOST OF A NOTE...
I WAS INNOCENT! BUT I'M DEAD-- DEAD--

GOODNIGHT, GENTLEMEN! RICH AND HAPPY DREAMS!
I MUST GET MY HANDS ON THEM! BUT HOW-- HOW?

The NEXT MORNING...
I LIKE A CHEERFUL FIRE-- AND THE CARETAKER HASN'T BUILT ONE...

JUST TWO BIG LOGS... AND IT'S HOTTER ALREADY!
I CAN ALMOST REACH HIM-- ALMOST--

A DEADLY SENSE OF FEAR GROWS IN THE ROOM...
STRANGE! I'M HOT-- AND YET-- I'M COLD WITH FRIGHT! I WONDER WHY--?
I CAN ALMOST GRAB HIM NOW...

I'M SCARED! I'VE GOT TO GET OUT OF THIS ROOM!
NEVER! YOU'LL NEVER GET OUT!

And ONE MURDERER GOES TO HIS FIERY DOOM!
THE LAW "BURNED" ME! NOW YOU MUST BURN!
AH-HH!!

I'LL HIDE YOUR BONES IN THESE DEEP ASHES! THEY'LL NEVER BE FOUND... UNTIL I HAVE TWO MORE VICTIMS-- TWO MORE VICTIMS!

STRANGE--I THOUGHT I HEARD A SCREAM...AND MY PARTNER WAS SUPPOSED TO BE HERE EARLY...

IT'S HOT IN HERE! BETTER OPEN THE WINDOW!
THAT OPEN WINDOW SEALS HIS FATE!

THE DRAFT FROM THE WINDOW FANS THE FIRE...
THE MORE DRAFT-- THE BIGGER AND HOTTER I GROW!

THAT DRAFT-- IT'S BLOWING ME TOWARD THE FIRE!
JUST LET ME TOUCH YOU--TOUCH YOU!

AIEEE-EE! I'LL BE BURNED ALIVE!
JUST AS I WAS ELECTROCUTED ALIVE! HA-HA-HA!

AND THE GHOST OF FIRE MAKES A SECOND MEAL ON SEARED, HUMAN FLESH...
HE TASTES GOOD! AND REVENGE TASTES SWEET! BUT HOW CAN I TRAP MY THIRD MURDERER?

THE THIRD MAN ENTERS THE ROOM OF BURNING FLAME...
WONDER WHERE MY PARTNERS ARE--AND WHAT'S THAT STRANGE ODOR IN THE AIR?
THE CARETAKER MUST'VE THROWN RUBBISH INTO THE FIRE... PHEW... ALMOST SMELLS LIKE BURNING FLESH... BUT THAT CAN'T BE...
BUT THE GHOST OF FIRE HAS A TRICK.
HE LOVES MONEY--- HAH! I CAN SHAPE THE FLAMES TO LOOK LIKE PILES OF MONEY!
SOMEONE THREW A BUNDLE OF CURRENCY INTO THE FIRE!
I MUST SAVE THE MONEY-- EVEN IF I GET BURNED!
THAT'S IT, GREEDY! COME CLOSER-- CLOSER..
Then...
EEYAAH! DON'T EAT ME... DON'T EAT--
HA! YES! LIKE THE FLAMES ONCE ATE THE NOTE THAT COULD HAVE PROVED MY INNOCENCE! DIE... DIE!!
AND A DREADFUL FEAST GOES ON IN THE FLAMES...
MURDERERS! EAT EACH OTHER! SO DO ALL MURDERERS END IN DEATH!
LATER THAT MORNING -- THE CARETAKER DISCOVERS...
BONES AND FLESH -- AND SKULLS-- UGH! OOOH!
THE END

The DEVIL COLLECTS

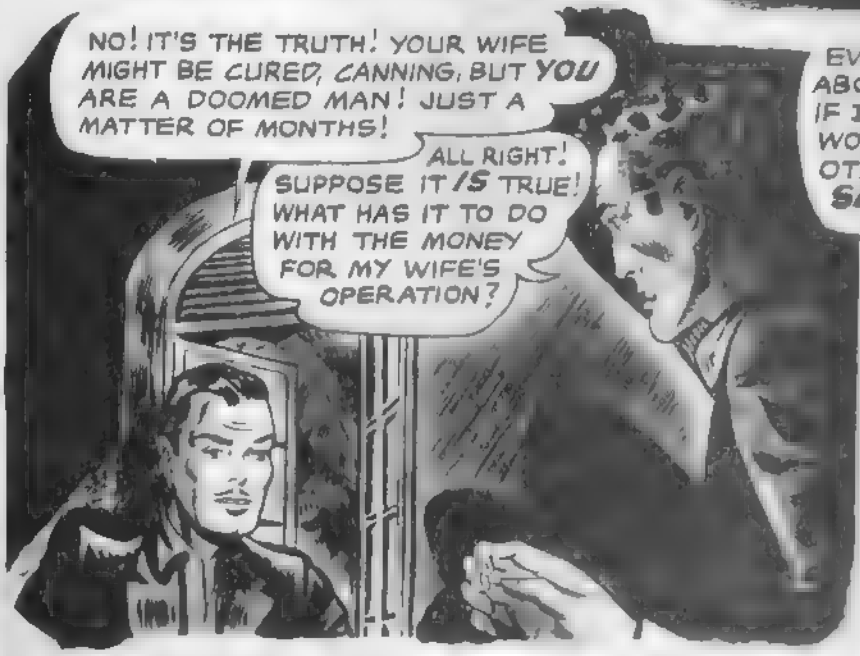
HE MADE A TERRIBLE BARGAIN, THEN TRIED TO WELCH! BUT THE ONE BILL COLLECTOR YOU CAN'T DUCK IS **DEATH!** AND GOOD IMPULSES GONE ASTRAY, CAN TURN TO THE WORST OF EVIL! THE **DEVIL** ALWAYS COLLECTS HIS DEBTS, AS REED CANNING FOUND OUT, BECAUSE HIS OWN **BODY** WAS PAST DUE...

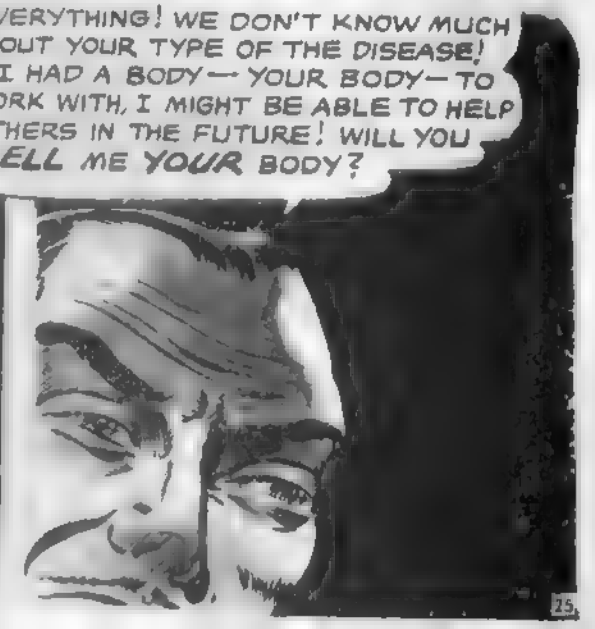
I COULD OPERATE BUT NOT HERE! WE HAVEN'T THE FACILITIES! IT MUST BE ENGLAND — OR SHE DIES!
GREAT HEAVENS. WHAT AM I GOING TO DO? I C-CAN'T RAISE THE MONEY!

THERE MIGHT BE A WAY, CANNING! BUT I CAN'T EXPLAIN NOW, OR HERE! CAN YOU COME TO MY OFFICE TOMORROW? AND YOU MUST BE PREPARED FOR A GREAT SHOCK!
YOUR OFFICE? A SHOCK? I — WELL, ALL RIGHT, I'LL COME!

SO NEXT AFTERNOON...
HERE ARE THE RESULTS OF THE TESTS WE MADE, CANNING! BAD NEWS!
I — I DON'T UNDERSTAND ANY OF THIS! WHY TEST ME, ANYWAY? IT'S MY WIFE, THE MONEY, WE WERE TO TALK ABOUT!

BUT YOU ARE ALSO ILL, CANNING! VERY ILL! I NOTICED THE SYMPTOMS SOME TIME AGO! YOU HAVE A VERY RARE FORM OF TROPICAL DISEASE!
NO! Y-YOU'RE LYING!

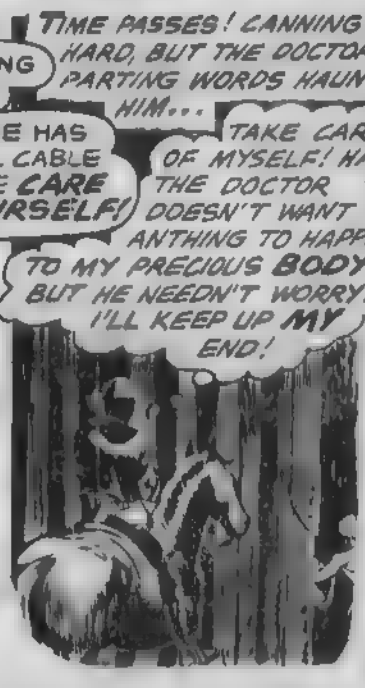

NO! IT'S THE TRUTH! YOUR WIFE MIGHT BE CURED, CANNING, BUT YOU ARE A DOOMED MAN! JUST A MATTER OF MONTHS!
ALL RIGHT! SUPPOSE IT IS TRUE! WHAT HAS IT TO DO WITH THE MONEY FOR MY WIFE'S OPERATION?


EVERYTHING! WE DON'T KNOW MUCH ABOUT YOUR TYPE OF THE DISEASE! IF I HAD A BODY — YOUR BODY — TO WORK WITH, I MIGHT BE ABLE TO HELP OTHERS IN THE FUTURE! WILL YOU SELL ME YOUR BODY?

DESPERATE, CANNING AGREES...
YOU UNDERSTAND, NOW? I MUST HAVE YOUR BODY AS SOON AS POSSIBLE! THAT IS VERY IMPORTANT! I MUST STUDY THE TISSUE BEFORE IT COMPLETELY DETERIORATES!
I KNOW! BUT FIRST CURE MY WIFE! THEN I — I'LL SEE THAT YOU GET MY BODY!

AND A CHECK CHANGES HANDS...
AS WE AGREED! TEN-THOUSAND DOLLARS!
THANKS! I DIDN'T KNOW I WAS WORTH SO MUCH— DEAD! AND DON'T WORRY— I'LL KEEP MY BARGAIN!

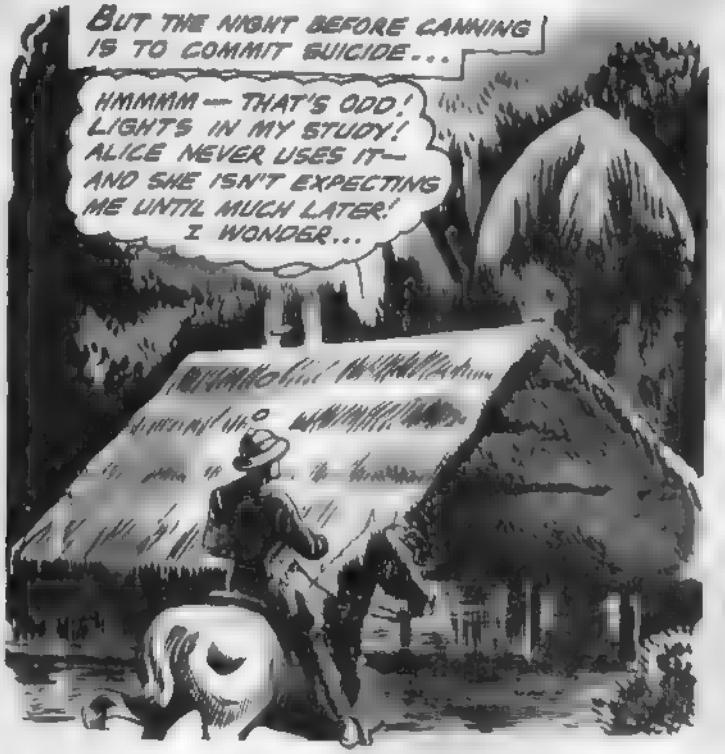
SEVERAL DAYS LATER...
GOODBYE! I'M GLAD YOU'RE GOING TO PERFORM THE OPERATION YOURSELF! IF ONLY ALICE GETS WELL!
IN LONDON SHE HAS A CHANCE! I'LL CABLE YOU! AND TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF!

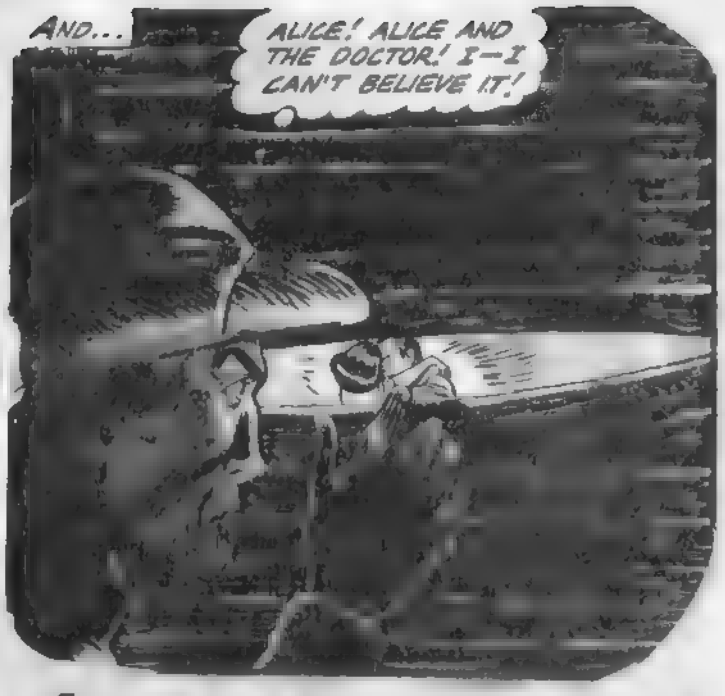

TIME PASSES! CANNING WORKS HARD, BUT THE DOCTOR'S PARTING WORDS HAUNT HIM...
TAKE CARE OF MYSELF! HAH! THE DOCTOR DOESN'T WANT ANTHING TO HAPPEN TO MY PRECIOUS BODY! BUT HE NEEDN'T WORRY! I'LL KEEP UP MY END!

FINALLY...
A CABLE FROM LONDON, URGI! THE OPERATION WAS A COMPLETE SUCCESS!
THAT IS GOOD, SIR! I AM MUCH HAPPY TO HEAR!

LATER...
ALICE! YOU LOOK MARVELOUS! THE PICTURE OF HEALTH! THANKS, DOCTOR!
HOW CAN WE EVER REPAY DOCTOR BISHOP, DARLING!

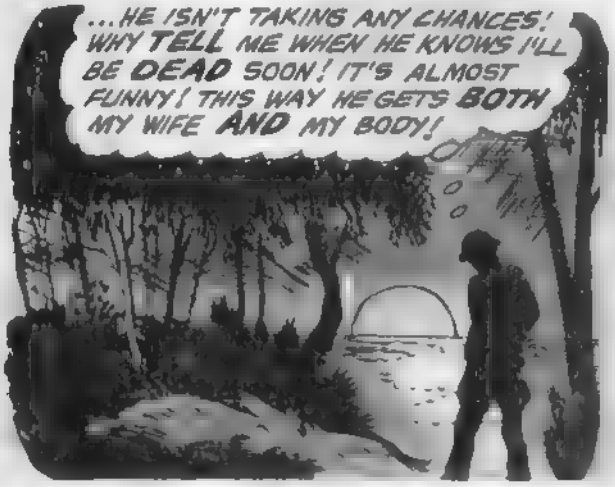
HOW? THE DOCTOR KNOWS...
SHE'S ALL RIGHT NOW, CANNING! BUT DON'T FORGET— I WANT YOUR BODY AS SOON AS POSSIBLE!
S-SURE! JUST G-GIVE ME A COUPLE OF WEEKS TO CLEAR UP MY AFFAIRS! I—I'LL LET YOU KNOW!

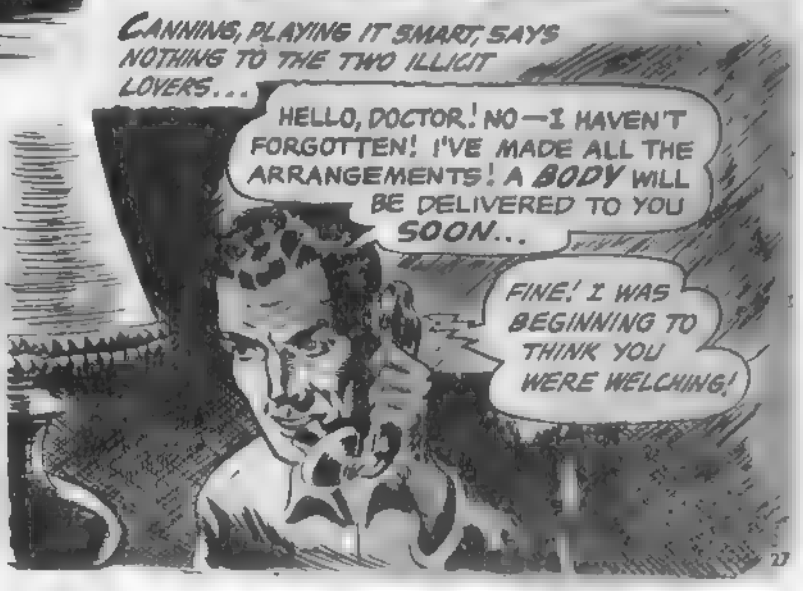

BUT THE NIGHT BEFORE CANNING IS TO COMMIT SUICIDE...
HMMMM — THAT'S ODD! LIGHTS IN MY STUDY! ALICE NEVER USES IT— AND SHE ISN'T EXPECTING ME UNTIL MUCH LATER! I WONDER...

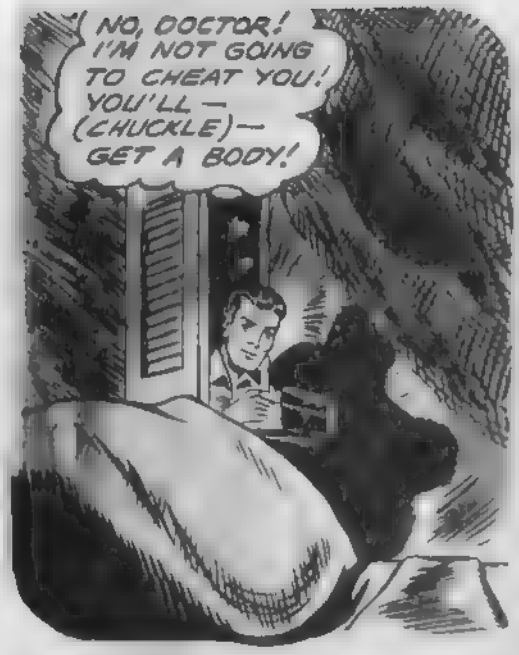

AND...
ALICE! ALICE AND THE DOCTOR! I—I CAN'T BELIEVE IT!

OF COURSE I LOVE YOU, DARLING! YOU KNOW THAT! BUT WE MUST TELL REED! EXPLAIN THAT WE FELL IN LOVE IN ENGLAND, AND...
NO, ALICE! DON'T TELL HIM YET! MAYBE— MAYBE THERE WON'T BE ANY NEED TO TELL HIM!

FOR HOURS THAT NIGHT, CANNING ROAMS THE JUNGLE PATHS IN A MURDEROUS RAGE...
WHAT A BLIND FOOL I'VE BEEN! SHE THINKS HE SAVED HER LIFE! MAYBE I— HAH—SHOULD HAVE TOLD HER HOW I GOT THE MONEY FOR THE OPERATION! AND HE'S SMART...


...HE ISN'T TAKING ANY CHANCES! WHY TELL ME WHEN HE KNOWS I'LL BE DEAD SOON! IT'S ALMOST FUNNY! THIS WAY HE GETS BOTH MY WIFE AND MY BODY!


CANNING, PLAYING IT SMART, SAYS NOTHING TO THE TWO ILLICIT LOVERS...
HELLO, DOCTOR! NO—I HAVEN'T FORGOTTEN! I'VE MADE ALL THE ARRANGEMENTS! A BODY WILL BE DELIVERED TO YOU SOON...
FINE! I WAS BEGINNING TO THINK YOU WERE WELCHING!


NO, DOCTOR! I'M NOT GOING TO CHEAT YOU! YOU'LL — (CHUCKLE)— GET A BODY!

ONLY IT WON'T BE THE BODY YOU'RE EXPECTING! YOU WANT MY WIFE— AND YOU'LL GET HER!

AN HOUR LATER HE HEARS THE SCREAMS HE HAS BEEN EXPECTING...
EEEEEEEEEEEE—
AHH—AT LAST! HAH-HAH! THE BITE OF THAT PARTICULAR SNAKE KILLS IN A FEW MINUTES!

ALICE! GREAT SCOTT! WHAT—
AHHHHHHH— IT—BIT—ME! HELP!
BRUSH VIPER, MASTER! VERY MUCH BAD! I KILL!

AS CANNING "COMFORTS" HIS DYING WIFE...
ALICE? CAN YOU HEAR ME? BECAUSE I WANT YOU TO KNOW THAT I DID IT, ALICE! I PUT THE SNAKE THERE!
Y-YOU! SO—YOU— KNEW— ABOUT US!

YES! I KNEW! I — OWWWWW—
YOU! I— HATE— OHHHHHHH—

SHE DEAD, SIR! I MUCH SORRY FOR THIS THING!
DEAD, EH? VERY WELL! I—I'LL TAKE CHARGE OF EVERYTHING, URGI! YOU CAN GO NOW!

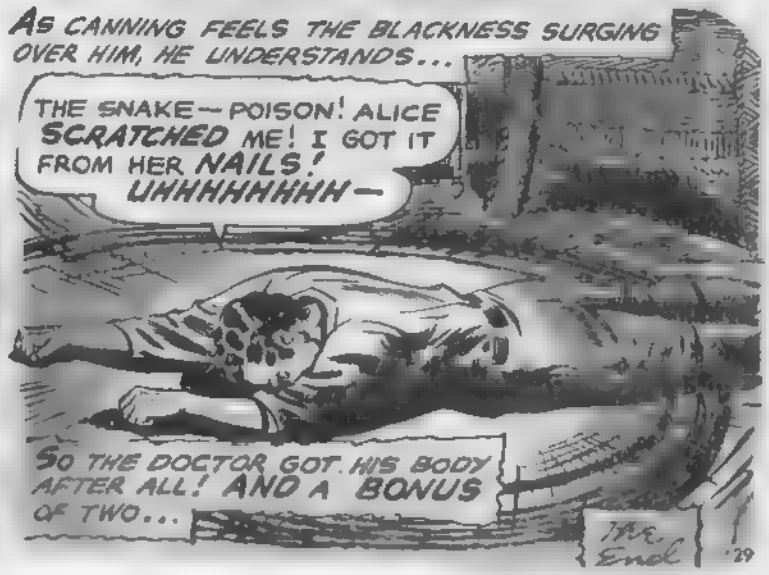
SOME HOURS LATER...
CANNING! GREAT SCOTT, MAN, WHAT DO YOU WANT AT THIS HOUR? W-WHAT'S IN THAT BOX?
YOU'LL SEE! YOU'LL FIND OUT THAT I ALWAYS KEEP MY BARGAINS, DOCTOR!

AND...
GOOD HEAVENS! ALICE! YOU KILLED HER!
NO! BUT MAYBE NOW YOU CAN DO A LITTLE RESEARCH ON SNAKE BITE! OR YOU COULD, EXCEPT THAT...

...EXCEPT THAT I'M GOING TO KILL YOU, TOO! YOU WERE A LITTLE TOO GREEDY! NOW YOU GET NEITHER MY BODY OR MY WIFE!
NO! STOP! YOU'RE INSANE!

HAH-HAH! MAYBE I AM! BUT YOU'RE DEAD!
YAAAAAAA-

BUT...
GAAAA—I—FEEL SO FUNNY! I—EVERYTHING B-BLACK! DYING! I KNOW IT—D-DYING!


AS CANNING FEELS THE BLACKNESS SURGING OVER HIM, HE UNDERSTANDS...
THE SNAKE—POISON! ALICE SCRATCHED ME! I GOT IT FROM HER NAILS! UHHHHHHHH—
SO THE DOCTOR GOT HIS BODY AFTER ALL! AND A BONUS OF TWO...
The End

WHEN A MAN WANTS TO LIVE AWAY FROM ALL OTHERS AND HAVE NO CONTACT WITH HIS FELLOW BEINGS, SOMETHING IS WRONG... THE LIFE HE SEEKS IS USUALLY JUST DEATH, HASTENING TOWARD HIM, LIKE A LOVER WITH OPEN ARMS REACHING OUT... THESE TWO KNOW EACH OTHER, THE MAN, AND THE DEATH HE CHOOSES TO CALL HIS OWN...SUBCONSCIOUSLY, LAWRENCE MASON KNEW IT, TOO, WHEN HE SUCCUMBED TO THE GIRL WHO LURED HIM TO A PIT OF...

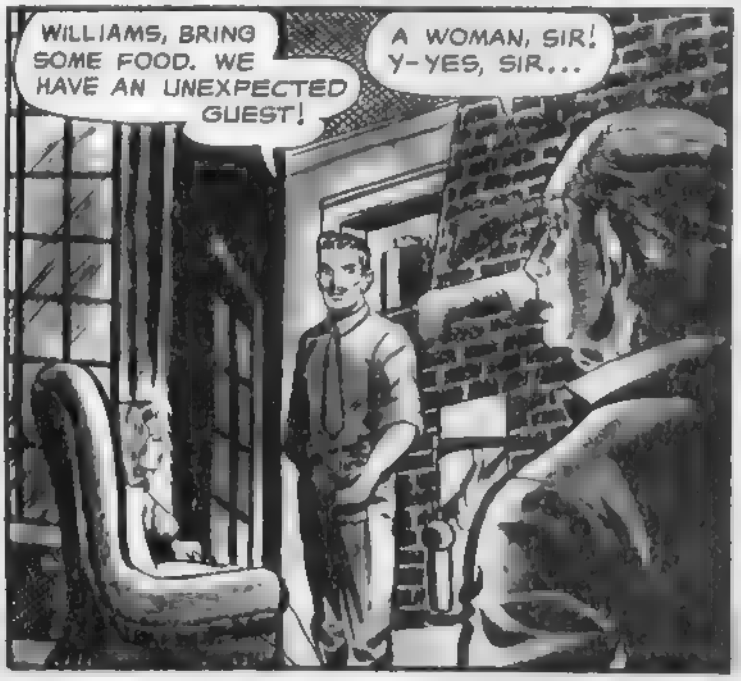
HISSING HORROR

MASON'S PRIVATE KINGDOM WAS CRAWLING WITH SNAKES... HE CONSIDERED THEM A PERSONAL FOE AND SPENT HIS TIME HUNTING AND KILLING, HOPING SOMEDAY TO FIND HE HAD WON OVER THEM...
INTO THE PIT WITH THE SKELETONS OF THE OTHERS!

BUT IN HIS LAVISH HOME, MASON FOUND IT A STRANGE, LONELY PLACE...
AHH... THE RAIN'S A PLEASANT SOUND...

WHA... WHAT'S THIS? A WOMAN! HERE, ON MY ISLAND! IMPOSSIBLE!
LET ME IN! PLEASE GIVE ME SHELTER!

HOW DID YOU GET HERE? COME... YOU MUST BE HALF DROWNED...
I'M LOST... I SAW YOUR LIGHT BURNING...


WILLIAMS, BRING SOME FOOD. WE HAVE AN UNEXPECTED GUEST!
A WOMAN, SIR! Y-YES, SIR...

MY NAME IS ASPTHA... I COME FROM...
DON'T TELL ME! YOU'LL BREAK THE ENCHANTMENT! I HAVE NEVER KNOWN A CREATURE AS BEAUTIFUL AS YOU ARE...

I'M WEARY... IT'S BEEN A STRAIN TO REACH HERE...
FORGIVE ME. WILLIAMS WILL PREPARE QUARTERS FOR YOU... YOU NEED SOME REST... WE'LL TALK IN THE MORNING...

GOOD NIGHT, BEAUTIFUL VISITOR... SLEEP WELL...
I WILL... MY MIND IS AT PEACE... NOW!

SNAKE! INVADING MY HOME! IN THE VERY CHAIR SHE USED! IT COULD HAVE STUNG HER! MAYBE POISONED HER!

YOU GO TOO FAR, UGLY ENEMY! BUT YOU WILL JOIN THE LEGIONS OF OTHERS LIKE YOU THAT I HAVE SLAIN! FROM THE DEEPEST CORNERS OF MY HEART I DESPISE YOU... DIE! DIE!

INTO THE PIT! THANK GOODNESS YOU DIDN'T FRIGHTEN THE ANGEL OF THE STORM WHO SLEEPS LIKE A CHILD INSIDE...

CURSING TRAILED OFF TO A LAUGHTER THAT BORDERED ON MADNESS...
SHE WILL NEVER LOOK UPON YOU... NEVER! NEVER!

MASON ROSE WITH THE EARLY SUN... HE HAD ADDED FERVOR IN HIS HATING AND HUNTING NOW...
NEVER SAW SO MANY OF THEM AT ONE TIME... MUST BE THE RAIN...

WHAT IS THIS YOU ARE DOING?
OH! GOOD MORNING! I'M SORRY THAT YOU HAD TO SEE... REALLY NOTHING TO BE ALARMED ABOUT...

DON'T MOVE! YOUR LIFE IS IN THE BALANCE... A GIAINT RATTLER... I'M GOING TO SHOOT...

THANK HEAVENS I WAS HERE TO SAVE YOU! I GUESS I MUST CONFESS NOW. THIS ISLAND IS INFESTED WITH SNAKES! I KILL AS MANY AS I SEE... AND DISPOSE OF THEM...

YOU SEE, I'LL WIN OUT OVER THEM SOMEDAY! HUNDREDS! ALL DEAD... SOMEDAY MY ISLAND WILL BE FREE...

I'M SORRY. I CAN IMAGINE HOW SHOCKING THIS MUST BE TO YOU... I GET CARRIED AWAY WITH LOATHING... FORGIVE ME! A MOST DISTRESSING SCENE FOR A WOMAN TO WITNESS... YOU'RE NOT ANGRY?
I'VE SEEN ENOUGH!

MASON'S GUEST WAS ALMOST SILENT DURING THE DAY... BY EVENING, SHE ASKED TO SEE THE GROUNDS, AND RELUCTANTLY HE AGREED...
THE ISLAND IS BEAUTIFUL, BUT FOR THE SNAKES...
YES. IT IS A BEAUTIFUL PLACE TO LIVE!

BE CAREFUL! OHH...
AIEEEE—

SHE'S DISAPPEARED! WHAT IS THIS PLACE? IT'S NOT ONE OF MY SNAKE PITS! A CAVE!

...HORROR STRUCK MASON'S HEART AS HE PEERED INTO THE BLACKNESS...
GOT TO FIND HER! THAT POOR GIRL IS A VICTIM OF MISFORTUNE! IF ANYTHING HAPPENS TO HER, I'LL NEVER FORGIVE MYSELF!

THE PITCH DARKNESS SERVED TO ENLIGHTEN MASON... HE MADE A REMARKABLE DISCOVERY...
I LOVE HER! I NEVER DREAMED THERE COULD BE SUCH A WOMAN! I MUST FIND HER... I'LL TELL HER... BEG HER TO MARRY ME...

HER VOICE! SHE'S SOBBING! WEEPING IN TERROR... HOW STRANGE HER CRIES SOUND! ONE WOULD ALMOST MISTAKE IT FOR LAUGHTER!
I'M COMING! HERE I AM... WHERE ARE YOU?

THE FLASH BEAM SUDDENLY IMPRISONED THE GIRL... MASON GASPED IN RELIEF... SHE WAS UNHURT... SHE LOOKED LIKE AN ANCIENT STATUE... BEAUTIFUL... AND ODDLY CALM...
I AM HERE... YOU FOUND ME!

YOU'RE SUFFERING SHOCK, MY DEAR! LET'S GET OUT OF THIS DREADFUL PLACE! I'LL TRY TO MAKE UP FOR ALL THESE GRIM EXPERIENCES...
NO. I HAVE NO WISH TO LEAVE...

NO... DON'T TRY TO PULL ME ALONG! I TELL YOU THERE IS NO LEAVING THIS PLACE... NOW OR EVER!
YOU'RE JUST HYSTERICAL! COME... I THINK I REMEMBER HOW TO GET BACK TO THE ENTRANCE!

BUT SUDDENLY A CRY ROSE IN MASON'S FEAR-TIGHTENED THROAT AND FROZE ON HIS LIPS... HE STARED IN DISBELIEF, AND MOTION REFUSED TO TAKE HOLD OF HIS LIMBS THAT WANTED TO RUN AND RUN...

STAY BEHIND ME... PERHAPS THEY WILL BE SATISFIED IN KILLING ONLY ME...
I TOLD YOU... THERE IS NO LEAVING HERE...

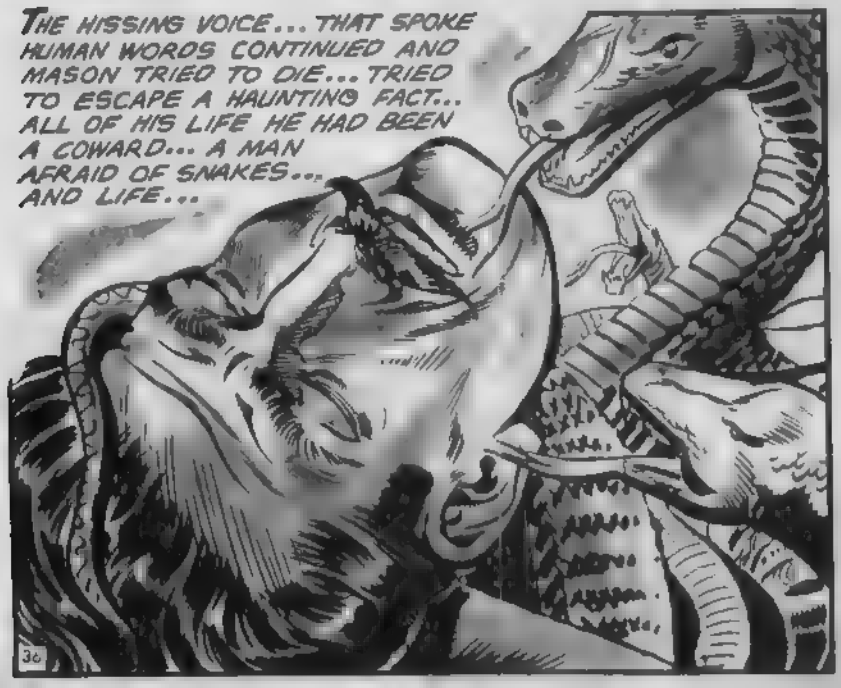
BUT I CAN TRY! I LOVE YOU! I'LL PROTECT YOU! EMPTY MY GUN... MAYBE THE SHOTS WILL FRIGHTEN THE OTHERS AWAY!
TOO LATE!

A THOUSAND STINGING BARBS STRUCK HIS BODY AT A SINGLE STROKE... POISON SHOT INTO HIS VEINS AND CREATED AN INSTANT ROARING FIRE OF PAIN... BUT MASON DID NOT DROP, FOR HE WAS STARING AT THE WOMAN HE LOVED...

I'M DYING, I KNOW... BUT YOU... WHAT IS HAPPENING TO YOU? IS IT BECAUSE I HAVE GONE MAD AS WELL?
YOUR DEATH TIME IS SLOWER THAN YOU HOPE FOR, MAN. AND YOU ARE NOT CLOUDED BY ANY MADNESS!

YOU SEE WHAT YOU SEE! THE QUEEN OF THE KINGDOM YOU TRIED TO DESTROY! HOW WE LOATHE YOU! INDEED I HAVE PROVEN AS MUCH BY TAKING ON ANOTHER FORM TO LURE YOU HERE...

... YOU WEAK FOOL! I MADE YOU LOVE WHAT YOU HATED! WE ROAMED THE EARTH AGES BEFORE YOUR KIND CAME TO TROUBLE US AND TO KILL US... BUT IN THE END WE WILL TAKE OVER AGAIN...


THE HISSING VOICE... THAT SPOKE HUMAN WORDS CONTINUED AND MASON TRIED TO DIE... TRIED TO ESCAPE A HAUNTING FACT... ALL OF HIS LIFE HE HAD BEEN A COWARD... A MAN AFRAID OF SNAKES... AND LIFE...

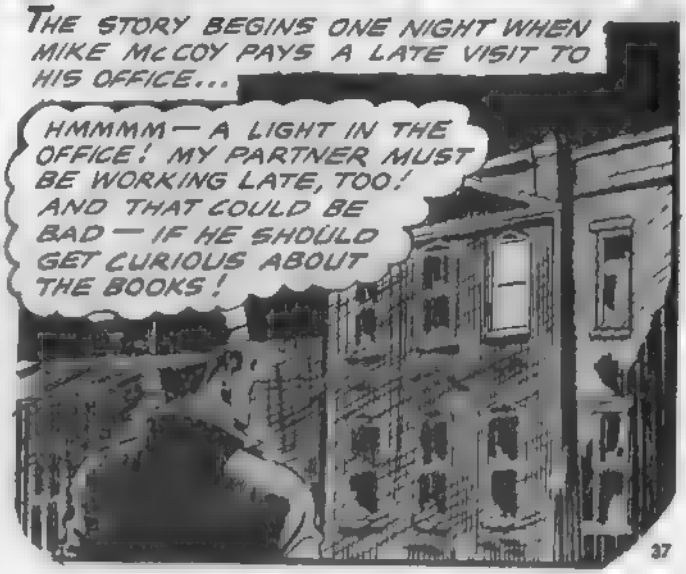
IT'S OVER, MY PETS... BUT THERE WILL BE OTHERS... AND THEY, TOO, WILL DESTROY THEMSELVES...
SO ENDS THE EERIE TALE OF LAWRENCE MASON... A MAN WHO LIVED AND LOST!
The End

MIKE McCOY WAS THE UNLUCKIEST GUY IN THE WORLD — SO UNLUCKY THAT HE SHOULD NEVER BEEN A CROOK! BUT HE WAS, AND THE FATES LAUGHED AS THEY WATCHED HIM SPIN HIS OWN WEB OF DESTRUCTION! AND IN THE GRIM ENDING, THE SCREAMS OF THREE NOT SO NICE PEOPLE SOUNDED AROUND A KITCHEN TABLE ON THE MORNING THAT **DEATH CAME TO BREAKFAST...**

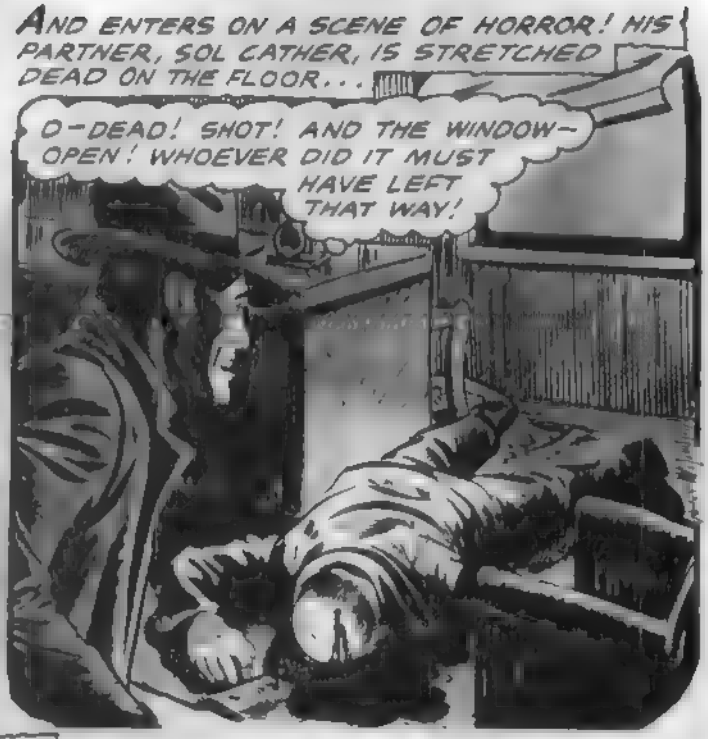
Sound of Mourning

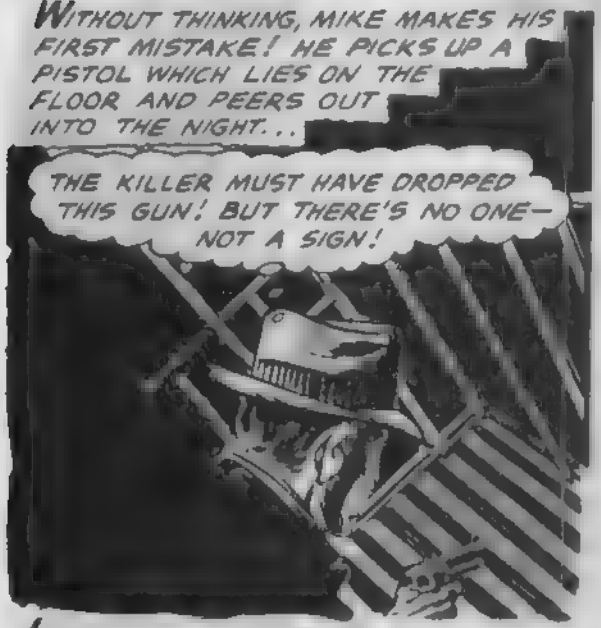
WE SET THE STAGE FOR OUR TERRIBLE LITTLE OPUS — MEET THE PRINCIPALS...

THE STORY BEGINS ONE NIGHT WHEN MIKE McCOY PAYS A LATE VISIT TO HIS OFFICE...

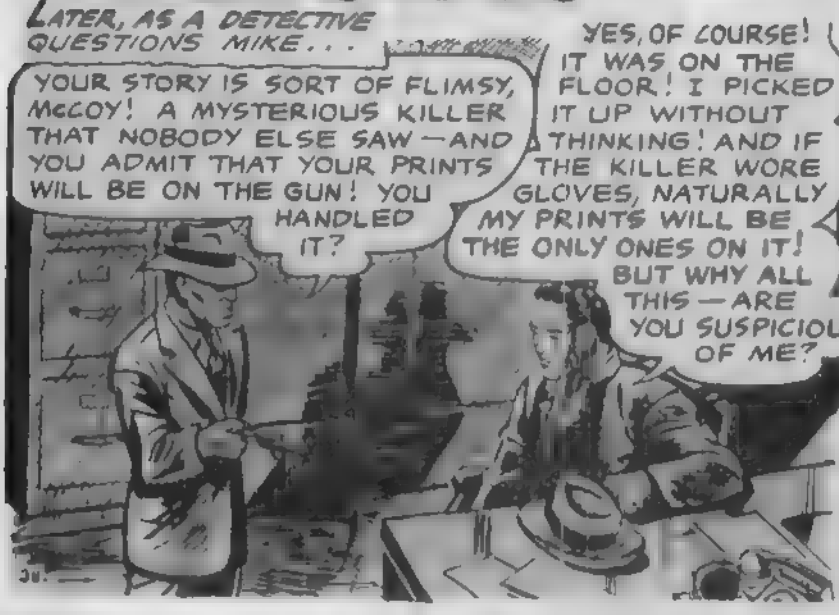


BUT THE SOUND OF A SHOT FROM THE OFFICE DRIVES EVERYTHING FROM MIKE'S HEAD! HE DASHES UP-STAIRS...
BANG!
GOOD GRIEF! THAT SHOT CAME FROM OUR OFFICE!


AND ENTERS ON A SCENE OF HORROR! HIS PARTNER, SOL CATHER, IS STRETCHED DEAD ON THE FLOOR...
O-DEAD! SHOT! AND THE WINDOW-OPEN! WHOEVER DID IT MUST HAVE LEFT THAT WAY!


WITHOUT THINKING, MIKE MAKES HIS FIRST MISTAKE! HE PICKS UP A PISTOL WHICH LIES ON THE FLOOR AND PEERS OUT INTO THE NIGHT...
THE KILLER MUST HAVE DROPPED THIS GUN! BUT THERE'S NO ONE—NOT A SIGN!

A MOMENT LATER...
HELLO, POLICE? THIS IS MR. McCOY OF McCOY AND CATHER, INVESTMENT BROKERS! THERE HAS BEEN A MURDER! YES, AT OUR OFFICE, 13 PARK ROW! MY PARTNER, MR. CATHER HAS BEEN SHOT! YES, OF COURSE, I'LL BE HERE! HURRY, PLEASE!


LATER, AS A DETECTIVE QUESTIONS MIKE...
YOUR STORY IS SORT OF FLIMSY, McCOY! A MYSTERIOUS KILLER THAT NOBODY ELSE SAW—AND YOU ADMIT THAT YOUR PRINTS WILL BE ON THE GUN! YOU HANDLED IT?
YES, OF COURSE! IT WAS ON THE FLOOR! I PICKED IT UP WITHOUT THINKING! AND IF THE KILLER WORE GLOVES, NATURALLY MY PRINTS WILL BE THE ONLY ONES ON IT! BUT WHY ALL THIS—ARE YOU SUSPICIOUS OF ME?

SUDDENLY HE HAS A HORRID THOUGHT...
GREAT SCOTT—THE BOOKS! IF THEY FIND OUT THAT I WAS TAKING MONEY FROM THE FIRM, THEY'LL THINK I KILLED CATHER BECAUSE HE GOT WISE TO ME! THIS COULD BE SERIOUS!

AND WHILE ALL THIS HAS BEEN GOING ON—AT MIKE'S HOME SOMETHING ELSE IS HAPPENING...

WHEN ARE YOU GOING TO TELL MIKE YOU WANT A DIVORCE, HONEY? WE CAN'T GO ON LIKE THIS!

I—I DON'T KNOW, BILL! I'M AFRAID OF HIM! WITH HIS TEMPER HE MIGHT DO ANYTHING...

NONSENSE! WHAT CAN HE DO? I'M A LAWYER AND I OUGHT TO KNOW! ANYWAY HE DOESN'T SUSPECT ME IN THE LEAST—SO I'LL AGREE TO HANDLE THE DIVORCE AS A (CHUCKLE)—FRIEND!

BUT ON WHAT GROUNDS, BILL? YOU KNOW IT'S VERY HARD TO GET A DIVORCE IN THIS STATE!

SUDDENLY...

WAIT A MINUTE, DARLING! THAT MIGHT BE MIKE CALLING NOW! DON'T MAKE ANY NOISE!

R-R-RINGG

A MINUTE LATER...

THAT WAS MIKE! HE—HE'S IN JAIL, CHARGED WITH SUSPICION OF MURDER! AND HE WANTS YOU, BILL, AT ONCE! THE POLICE THINK HE KILLED HIS PARTNER!

WHAT?

THIS IS IT, BABY! DON'T YOU SEE? I DON'T KNOW HOW MIKE GOT HIMSELF INTO THIS MESS, OR IF HE'S GUILTY OR NOT, BUT THIS IS OUR CHANCE! FORGET THE DIVORCE — BECAUSE I'M GOING TO **DEFEND** MIKE!

SO THE TWO LOVERS MAKE THEIR PLANS CAREFULLY! AND ALREADY IT APPEARS THAT MIKE McCOY, INNOCENT OF MURDER THOUGH HE IS, IS AS GOOD AS IN THE ELECTRIC CHAIR...

I'LL GO DOWN AND SEE MIKE NOW! REMEMBER — LAY LOW AND DON'T TRY TO SEE ME UNTIL THIS IS OVER! AND IT WON'T—(CHUCKLE)—BE LONG!

ANYTHING YOU SAY, DEAR! BUT IT *IS* A LITTLE HARD ON POOR MIKE!

LATER AT THE JAIL...

IT DOES LOOK BAD FOR YOU, MIKE! WHAT A FOOL YOU WERE TO TOUCH THAT GUN—AND WHERE DID IT COME FROM ANYWAY?

THE KILLER DROPPED IT, I SUPPOSE! AND THE POLICE SAY THE SERIAL NUMBER HAD BEEN FILED OFF AND IT CAN'T BE TRACED!

SO GET ME OUT OF HERE, BILL! WE'VE BEEN FRIENDS FOR YEARS — YOU KNOW I WOULDN'T MURDER ANYBODY!

I'LL DO MY BEST, OF COURSE, OLD FRIEND! BUT ARE YOU SURE YOU'RE TELLING ME EVERYTHING?

WELL, THAT IS, I GUESS I MIGHT AS WELL TELL YOU! I — I'D BEEN TAKING MONEY FROM THE FIRM, BILL! FOR SOME TIME NOW! AND IF THE COPS FIND THAT OUT, WELL, YOU CAN SEE HOW IT WILL LOOK FOR ME!

AND WHEN THE ROGUE LAWYER LEAVES THE JAIL, HE IS VERY HAPPY INDEED! HE KNOWS THAT MIKE HAS JUST SIGNED HIS OWN DEATH WARRANT...

OH, THE FOOL! THE POOR FOOL! HE, IN PERSON, PUT THE VERY WEAPON IN MY HANDS THAT WILL CONVICT HIM! NOTHING TO IT NOW!

AND SO THE TRIAL BEGINS...

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN OF THE JURY! I, AS DISTRICT ATTORNEY, FEEL PITY AND COMPASSION FOR THIS POOR MAN ON TRIAL BEFORE US! BUT WE CANNOT ALLOW OUR PERSONAL FEELINGS TO INTERFERE WITH OUR DUTY! HE IS A MURDERER — AND A THIEF AS WELL! AND WHEN HE WAS CAUGHT EMBEZZLING THE FUNDS OF HIS FIRM...

BUT HOW DID THEY KNOW?

TOO BAD THEY FOUND OUT ABOUT THAT, MIKE!

LATER, AS BILL POINDEXTER PLEADS FOR HIS CLIENT...

HERE WE HAVE A WEAK MAN, AN HONEST CITIZEN, WHO, IN A MOMENT OF NEED AND PANIC DID WRONG! BUT I ASK YOU, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, TO SHOW MERCY...

WHAT I REALLY WANT IS — (CHUCKLE) — FOR YOU TO CONVICT HIM!

AND AFTER THE VERDICT IS BROUGHT IN...

YOU HAVE BEEN FOUND GUILTY OF MURDER, MIKE McCOY! AND IT IS MY SOLEMN DUTY TO PRONOUNCE SENTENCE OF DEATH ON YOU! SO I ORDER YOU TO BE TAKEN FROM THIS PLACE AND CONFINED UNTIL THE WEEK OF...

NO — NO! I'M INNOCENT!

SOME MONTHS NOW PASS! THE USUAL APPEALS ARE MADE — AND FAIL! THEN ONE STORMY NIGHT...

AIN'T THIS THE NIGHT McCOY GOES? THE GUY THAT KILLED HIS PARTNER?

YEAH — THE POOR GUY RIDES THE THUNDER-BOLT TONIGHT! BRRRRR —

IT'S TIME NOW, McCOY! TRY TO ACT LIKE A MAN!

IT WON'T HURT, FELLOW! YOU'LL NEVER FEEL IT!

I — I'M INNOCENT! YOU'RE KILLING AN INNOCENT MAN! I SWEAR IT!

AS A FELLOW INMATE PRAYS FOR THE DOOMED MAN...

THE L-LIGHT! GOING O-DIM! THAT MEANS THEY'RE TESTING THE CHAIR! HAVE MERCY ON HIM!

IN THE CITY, IN THE HOME OF EVA McCOY...

ONLY A FEW MINUTES NOW, BABY! MIKE DIES AT MIDNIGHT — THEN YOU'LL BE FREE!

I — I'M SUDDENLY AFRAID! I FEEL COLD ALL OVER!

THIS IS NO TIME TO LOSE YOUR NERVE, SWEETHEART! AFTER ALL, WE DIDN'T KILL HIM! AND MAYBE HE REALLY DID KILL THE GUY!

N-NO! I-I NEVER DID THINK HE WAS GUILTY!

SO, DURING A CHILLING KISS, AS A MAN DIES, BOTH PLOTTERS REALIZE THAT THE THING BETWEEN THEM HAS SPOILED...

I — I DON'T LOVE HIM ANYMORE! I THINK I HATE HIM — AND MYSELF! BUT WE'RE IN IT TOGETHER NOW!

NO — IT ISN'T THE SAME! I FEEL DIRTY! BUT I KILLED MIKE FOR HER, IN A WAY, AND I'M GOING TO HAVE HER!

MEANTIME, BACK AT THE PRISON, A NEW AND SURPRISING ELEMENT ENTERS THE DRAMA...

OKAY, DOC, HE'S ALL YOURS! BUT HURRY! IF WE GET CAUGHT, WE'LL BOTH BE WISHING WE WERE DEAD, TOO!

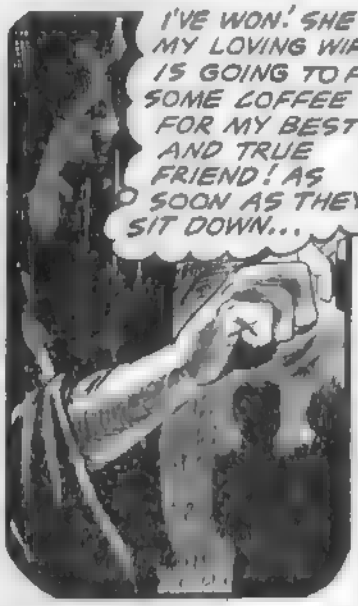
DON'T GET EXCITED, HECTOR! I'VE PAID YOU WELL! I ONLY WANT TO PERFORM A LITTLE EXPERIMENT!

THE ONE THING THAT EVA AND BILL POINDEXTER COULD NOT POSSIBLY KNOW—THAT THE PRISON DOCTOR HAS BEEN WORKING FOR YEARS ON A FORMULA TO RESTORE HUMAN LIFE...
NOW I SIMPLY INJECT TWO CC'S OF MY FORMULA! STRAIGHT INTO HIS HEART...
YOU THINK THIS IS GONNA WORK, DOC? YOU CAN REALLY BRING A GUY BACK AFTER HE'S BEEN ELECTROCUTED?
I HOPE SO—BUT I DON'T EXPECT MIRACLES! AT BEST IT WILL ONLY BE FOR A FEW MINUTES, POSSIBLY AN HOUR! REMEMBER THAT THE TISSUES AND ORGANS HAVE BEEN BADLY BURNT!
YEAH, I GUESS SO! BUT I DON'T LIKE—HEY, YOU HEAR SOMETHING, DOC?
THE DEAD MAN, BROUGHT BACK TO LIFE FOR A LITTLE TIME, CRUSHES THEIR HEADS TOGETHER...
SORRY! BUT ALL YOU'LL GET IS A BAD HEADACHE!
UHHHHHH—
OWWWW—
SPLATT
NOW, THANKS TO YOU, DOCTOR, I'VE GOT A LITTLE TIME! AN HOUR AT THE MOST, I THINK YOU SAID! AND AN HOUR SHOULD BE LONG ENOUGH TO DO—WHAT I WANT TO DO!
SO MIKE McCOY GETS A SECOND CHANCE! AS THE FALSE DAWN BREAKS IN THE EAST, HE GETS OUT OF THE PRISON BY THE SIMPLE EXPEDIENT OF DONNING THE DOCTOR'S CLOTHES AND DRIVING OUT OF THE GATES IN THE DOCTOR'S CAR! HE KNOWS THAT HE HASN'T MUCH TIME, BECAUSE WHEN THE FORMULA WEARS OFF, HE WILL DIE AGAIN! AND NOW HE DRIVES IMMEDIATELY TO HIS HOUSE—AND SEES WHAT HE KNEW HE WOULD SEE...
SO VERY HAPPY, AREN'T THEY? TOASTING MY DEATH IN MY CHAMPAGNE! THE DEVILS! I KNEW THAT BILL WAS DOUBLE-CROSSING ME—AND NOW I UNDERSTAND WHY!

FIGHTING AGAINST TIME NOW, MIKE GOES AROUND TO THE KITCHEN AND SOFTLY ENTERS...
THEY WON'T BE SLEEPING TONIGHT—AND SOON THEY'LL BE HUNGRY, WANT SOME BREAKFAST! AND I'LL HAVE EVERYTHING READY!

THIS OLD WIRE FROM THE CLOSET WILL DO! THEN I'LL HIDE IT UNDER THE CARPETING AND HOOK IT INTO THE TRANSFORMER IN THE BASEMENT!

THERE! NOW ALL I DO IS WAIT—THEN I'LL SEE HOW THEY LIKE IT! OH—I THINK I HEAR THEM COMING NOW!


I'VE WON! SHE—MY LOVING WIFE IS GOING TO FIX SOME COFFEE FOR MY BEST AND TRUE FRIEND! AS SOON AS THEY SIT DOWN...

MIKE McCOY FLICKS A SWITCH, AND...
OWWWWWWW—
UGNNNNNNNN—

HA-HA-HA-HA — D-DID IT! I ELECTROCUTED THEM! HE-HEE—OHHH— MY HEART! D-DYING AGAIN!

LATER—A FIRE OF UNEXPLAINED ORIGIN...
SHE'S GOING TO THE GROUND, CHIEF! HOW DO YOU THINK IT STARTED?
WHO KNOWS? BUT IF ANYONE WAS IN THERE—THEY'RE DEAD NOW!
The End

GREETINGS, FRIENDS, FIENDS, AND DEAR, DEADLY FELLOW-CREATURES! GATHER 'ROUND WHILE I BEAT THE TOMTOM THAT MAKES THE VICIOUS VIPERS BLEND WITH THE VOODOO CALL! I, THE VOODOO DOCTOR, WILL INTRODUCE YOU TO ROY GIFFORD, OF THE NATIONAL FRUIT COMPANY WHO CAME TO CASTLE MORENO, IN THE HILLS OF HISPANIOLA, THINKING HE WOULD CORNER THE BANANA MARKET...

The Witch Doctor recounts the weird story of

The ZOMBI'S Bride

TO REACH CASTLE MORENO, ROY STOPPED FIRST AT A LITTLE TOWN HIGH IN THE MOUNTAINS WHERE AN OLD INN CALLED "LE CHEVAL NOIR" WAS RUN BY AN UGLY RUFFIAN NAMED VICTOR.

AH, M'SIEU GIFFORD, THE GENERAL MUST BE EXPECTING YOU! A CARRIAGE IS COMING ALREADY TO TAKE YOU UP TO CASTLE MORENO!

YES, MY COMPANY SENT ME TO BUY HIS ENTIRE BANANA CROP!

BUT GENERAL MORENO IS VERY FORGETFUL, M'SIEU! HE EVEN FORGETS THAT HE IS TO MARRY MY BEAUTIFUL DAUGHTER, GABRIELLE! WOULD YOU REMIND HIM WHEN YOU SEE HIM?

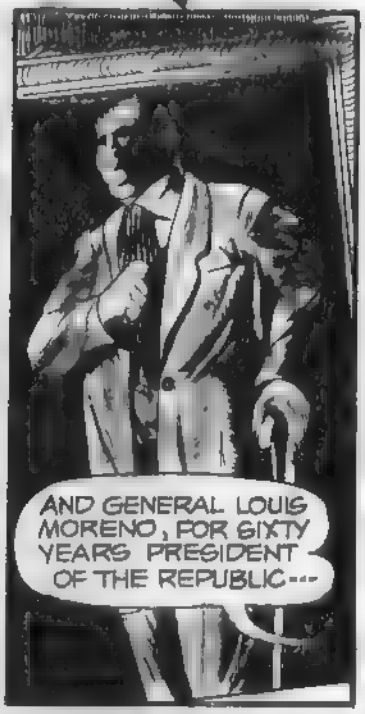
WHY, OF COURSE!

SO ROY GIFFORD RODE UP TO CASTLE MORENO, WHERE HE WAS GREETED BY GENERAL MORENO IN PERSON...
I'M ROY GIFFORD, OF THE NATIONAL FRUIT COMPANY---
OF COURSE! COME WITH ME, MR. GIFFORD, WHILE I SHOW YOU THE BANANA PLANTATIONS!

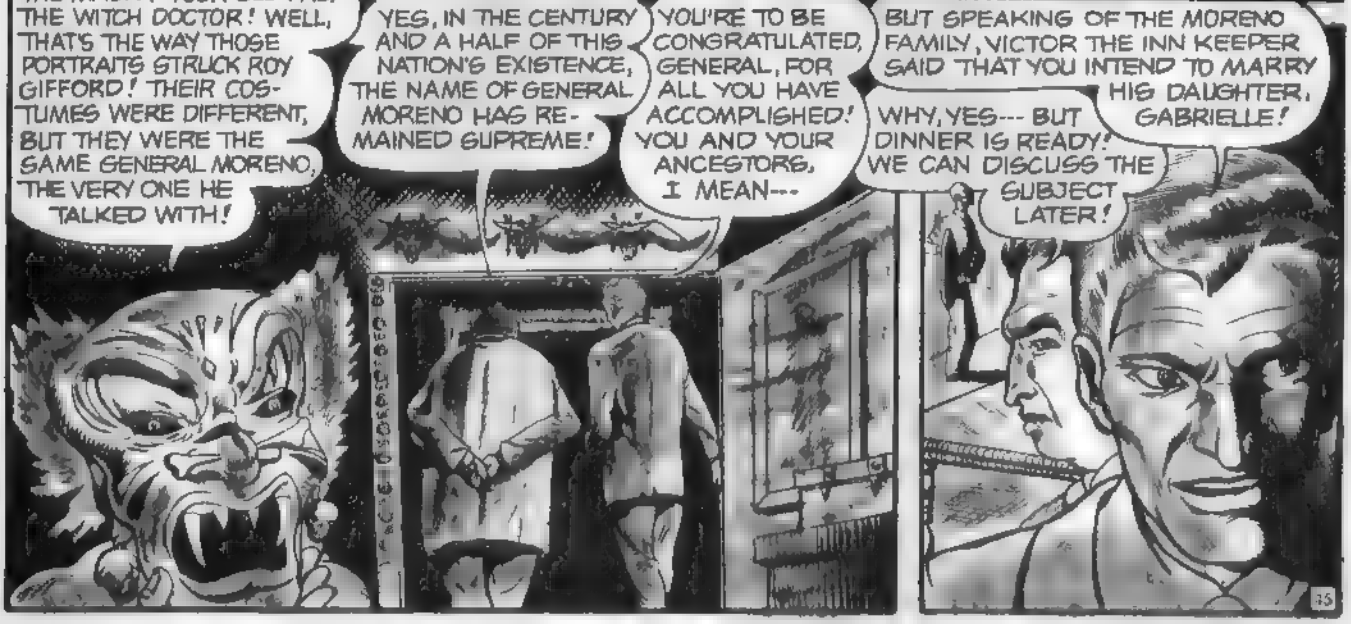
AND EVERYWHERE, AS FAR AS THE EYE COULD VIEW, ROY SAW BANANAS-- AND MORE BANANAS...YES, GENERAL MORENO HAD PLENTY OF BANANAS!
A WONDERFUL CROP! BUT HOW CAN YOU GATHER THE BANANAS AT THE PRICE YOU'VE OFFERED THEM TO NATIONAL FRUIT?
THE MORENOS HAVE ALWAYS HANDLED THAT PROBLEM SATISFACTORILY! COME INTO THE CASTLE, MR. GIFFORD, AND I'LL SHOW YOU SOME OF MY ANCESTORS!

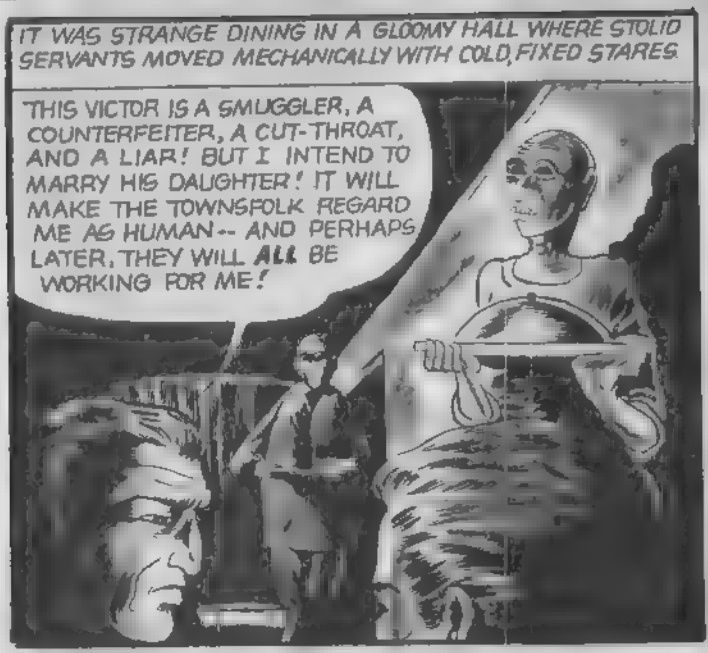
THIS WAS GENERAL GUILLAUME MORENO, WHO FOUGHT THE ARMIES OF NAPOLEON---

AND HERE IS GENERAL ANTOINE MORENO, WHO FOUGHT THE ARMIES THAT FOUGHT NAPOLEON---


AND GENERAL LOUIS MORENO, FOR SIXTY YEARS PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC---

AND GENERAL PIERRE MORENO GENERAL IN CHIEF OF OUR ARMY DURING BOTH WORLD WARS!


RECOGNIZE ME, EVEN WITH THE MASK? YOUR OLD PAL, THE WITCH DOCTOR! WELL, THAT'S THE WAY THOSE PORTRAITS STRUCK ROY GIFFORD! THEIR COSTUMES WERE DIFFERENT, BUT THEY WERE THE SAME GENERAL MORENO, THE VERY ONE HE TALKED WITH!
YES, IN THE CENTURY AND A HALF OF THIS NATION'S EXISTENCE, THE NAME OF GENERAL MORENO HAS REMAINED SUPREME!
YOU'RE TO BE CONGRATULATED, GENERAL, FOR ALL YOU HAVE ACCOMPLISHED! YOU AND YOUR ANCESTORS, I MEAN---
BUT SPEAKING OF THE MORENO FAMILY, VICTOR THE INN KEEPER SAID THAT YOU INTEND TO MARRY HIS DAUGHTER, GABRIELLE!
WHY, YES--- BUT DINNER IS READY! WE CAN DISCUSS THE SUBJECT LATER!

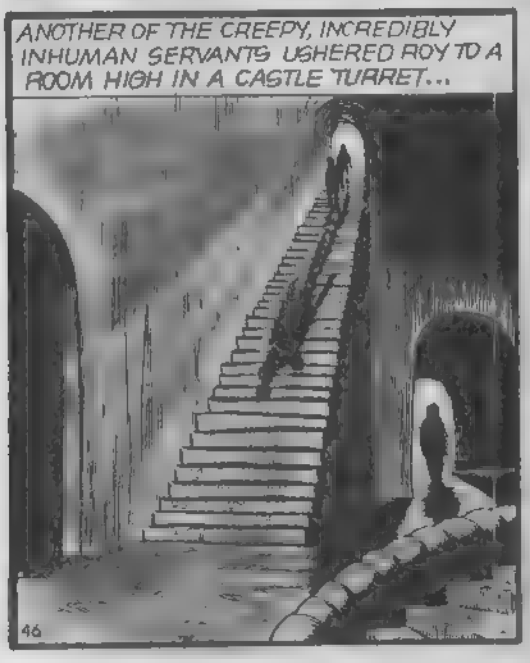

IT WAS STRANGE DINING IN A GLOOMY HALL WHERE STOLID SERVANTS MOVED MECHANICALLY WITH COLD, FIXED STARES.
THIS VICTOR IS A SMUGGLER, A COUNTERFEITER, A CUT-THROAT, AND A LIAR! BUT I INTEND TO MARRY HIS DAUGHTER! IT WILL MAKE THE TOWNSFOLK REGARD ME AS HUMAN-- AND PERHAPS LATER, THEY WILL ALL BE WORKING FOR ME!

AND AFTER DINNER, ROY SAW MORE OF THE FACE-LESS SERVITORS AS MORENO SHOWED HIM THROUGH THE CASTLE...
THIS IS MY TROPHY ROOM! HERE I KEEP WEAPONS THAT I HAVE USED-- I MEAN THAT MY FAMILY HAS USED-- DURING THE PAST 150 YEARS!

HERE, FOR EXAMPLE, ARE TWO DUELING REVOLVERS, A PERFECTLY MATCHED PAIR, BOTH MUZZLE-LOADERS!

THEY EVEN HAVE A MOLD IN WHICH BULLETS CAN BE CAST! IT BELONGS WITH THE SET OF REVOLVERS!
HOW REMARKABLE!

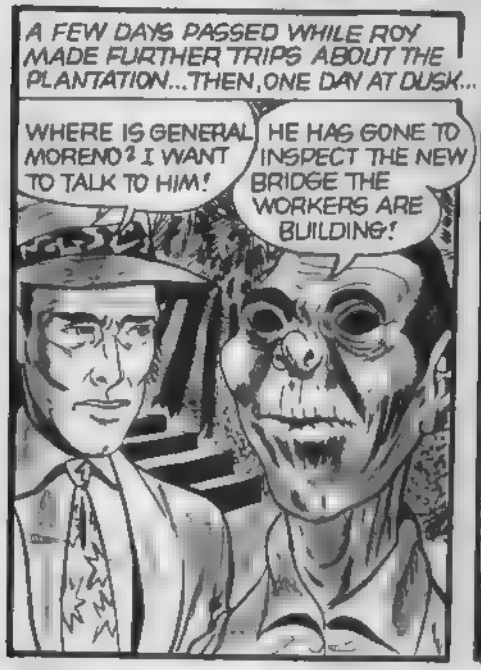
SINCE YOU ADMIRE THEM SO GREATLY, TAKE THEM AS A MEMENTO OF YOUR STAY IN CASTLE MORENO!
WHY--WHY, THANK YOU, GENERAL---


ANOTHER OF THE CREEPY, INCREDIBLY INHUMAN SERVANTS USHERED ROY TO A ROOM HIGH IN A CASTLE TURRET...

WHERE FROM HIS VANTAGE POINT, ROY VIEWED PROCESSIONS OF WORKERS GATHERING BANANAS BY MOONLIGHT!

BY THEN, ROY GIFFORD SHOULD HAVE BEGUN TO ADD THE SCORE, BUT ALL THIS WAS NEW TO HIM! INSTEAD, ROY WENT ABOUT HIS TASK OF ESTIMATING THE BANANA CROP ON MORENO'S PLANTATION... UNTIL. . A FEW DAYS LATER...
I'VE FINISHED MY APPRAISAL, GENERAL MORENO! I'D LIKE TO GO DOWN TO THE INN AND SEND A CABLE TO MY NEW YORK OFFICE---
NO, NO-- NOT TODAY, MR. GIFFORD! YOU HEAR THOSE BEATING TOMTOMS?

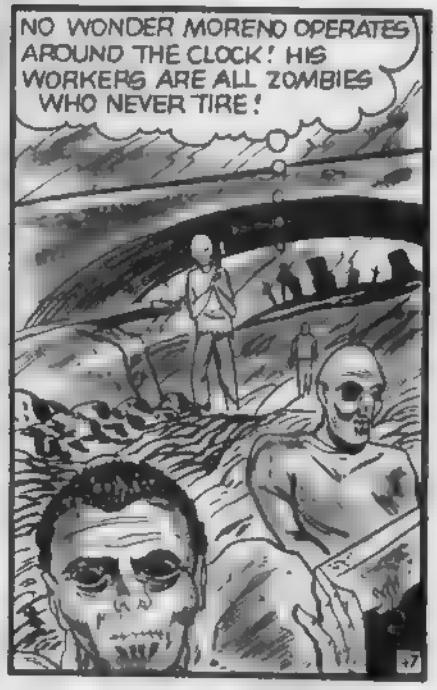
THEY ARE HOLDING A FUNERAL FOR HENRI BEAUFORT, THE POSTMASTER! HE WILL BE BURIED IN THE CEMETERY ON THE HILL! THE TOMTOMS ARE TO WARD OFF EVIL SPIRITS! THE PEOPLE AROUND HERE BELIEVE IN EVIL SPELLS!
SO I SEE! PROBABLY THEY'D BE SUSPICIOUS OF ALL STRANGERS AT A TIME LIKE THIS!


A FEW DAYS PASSED WHILE ROY MADE FURTHER TRIPS ABOUT THE PLANTATION...THEN, ONE DAY AT DUSK...
WHERE IS GENERAL MORENO? I WANT TO TALK TO HIM!
HE HAS GONE TO INSPECT THE NEW BRIDGE THE WORKERS ARE BUILDING!

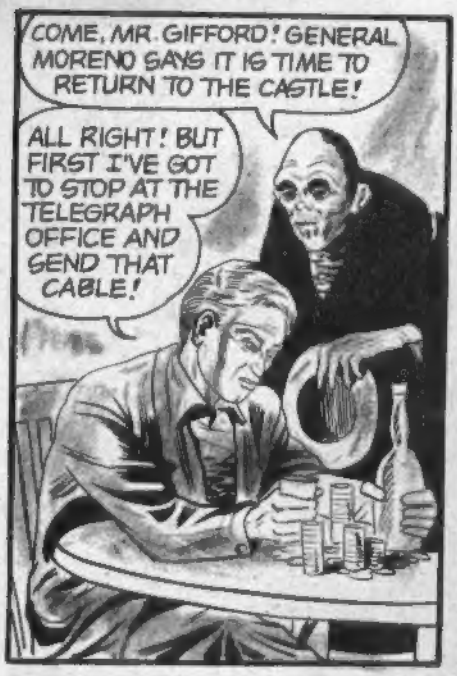
TO REACH THE BRIDGE, ROY TOOK A SHORT CUT PAST THE CEMETERY.. AND THERE...
GENERAL MORENO, DIGGING UP THE GRAVE OF HENRI BEAUFORT, THE POSTMASTER!

AS ROY WATCHED, SCARCELY BELIEVING HIS EYES OR EARS, HE SAW GENERAL MORENO BREATHE FALSE LIFE INTO THE CORPSE OF HENRI BEAUFORT...
SPEAK, LIVING DEAD MAN! I, THE MASTER ZOMBI, HAVE MADE YOU ONE OF US! YOU MUST DO AS I COMMAND!
I--SHALL OBEY---

GO, ZOMBI! JOIN THE REST OF MY SLAVES WHO WORK UNCEASINGLY AT THE TASKS I ASSIGN THEM!


NO WONDER MORENO OPERATES AROUND THE CLOCK! HIS WORKERS ARE ALL ZOMBIES WHO NEVER TIRE!

NATURALLY, ROY GIFFORD HURRIED BACK UP TO THE CASTLE AND THERE, WHEN GENERAL MORENO RETURNED, ROY GREETED HIM WITH A DEAD PAN EXPRESSION LIKE ONE OF MY MASKS...
ONE OF MY SERVANTS SAID YOU WERE LOOKING FOR ME!
YES, I STARTED OVER TO THE BRIDGE, BUT LOST THE WAY, SO I CAME BACK! I THINK I'D BETTER GO DOWN TO THE INN AND SEND THAT CABLE!
AN EXCELLENT IDEA! I'LL HAVE THE CARRIAGE MADE READY SO WE CAN GO TOGETHER! THEN I CAN TALK TO THE INN KEEPER ABOUT HIS DAUGHTER!
I WONDER-- DOES MORENO SUSPECT?
AT THE INN, MORENO'S ARRIVAL WAS THE CAUSE FOR GREAT CELEBRATION...
NOW'S MY CHANCE TO SLIDE INTO THE INN AND SPILL THIS ZOMBI BUSINESS!
AH, GABRIELLE --MA CHERIE!
AH, GENERAL MORENO, MY SWEET! YOU HAVE COME FOR ME AT LAST!
BUT ROY SOON FOUND OUT THAT HE WAS UNDER CONSTANT WATCH BY ONE OF MORENO'S SERVANTS...
IT IS NOT WISE TO TALK TO PEOPLE AT THE INN!
I'M JUST BUYING WINE FOR EVERYONE, IN HONOR OF GENERAL MORENO AND HIS BRIDE-TO-BE!
AH-- AMERICAN MONEY!
I CANNOT GIVE YOU CHANGE IN AMERICAN MONEY, M'SIEU! BUT I CAN TAKE OUT FOR THE WINE AND GIVE YOU CHANGE IN SILVER PESOS! WILL THAT DO?
OF COURSE!
GIVE US MORE WINE AND GIVE ME CHANGE IN MORE PESOS!
AND STILL MORE WINE-- AND STILL MORE PESOS!
YES, A GRAND IDEA WAS BURNING THROUGH ROY'S FEVERED BRAIN--A VERY GRAND IDEA INVOLVING SILVER PESOS!


COME, MR. GIFFORD! GENERAL MORENO SAYS IT IS TIME TO RETURN TO THE CASTLE!
ALL RIGHT! BUT FIRST I'VE GOT TO STOP AT THE TELEGRAPH OFFICE AND SEND THAT CABLE!

A TEN WORD CABLE TO NEW YORK! HOW MUCH WILL THAT COST!
TEN PESOS, M'SIEU!

TEN PESOS IS NOTHING! I WILL GIVE YOU TEN PESOS AND STILL KEEP PLENTY FOR MYSELF!
COME, MR. GIFFORD! THE CARRIAGE IS WAITING!

SO THE CARRIAGE RETURNED TO CASTLE MORENO, TAKING ALONG ONE MORE PASSENGER...
SO! YOUR DAUGHTER GABRIELLE HAS GONE TO THE CASTLE?
AH, YES! TONIGHT SHE WILL DINE WITH THE GENERAL AND THE AMERICAN WHO SPENDS HIS MONEY SO FOOLISHLY!

AT THE CASTLE, ALL WAS READY FOR THE BETROTHAL BANQUET...
IN AN HOUR WE SHALL DINE!
OH, HOW LOVELY!
GOOD! THAT WILL GIVE ME JUST TIME TO GET READY!

IN HIS ROOM, ROY MELTED DOWN A DOZEN OF VICTOR'S PESOS, ONE BY ONE...
EACH ONE OF THESE WILL MAKE A PERFECT ONE OUNCE BULLET!

AND MOLDED THEM INTO BULLETS...

THERE'S ONE WAY TO SETTLE A ZOMBI PERMANENTLY, AND THAT'S WITH A SILVER BULLET! I HAVE ENOUGH HERE TO FIX MORENO AND HIS CREW OF SERVANTS! THEY'LL NEVER EVEN GUESS HOW I GOT THE SILVER!

YES, ROY GIFFORD WAS RIGHT! NO ZOMBI CAN STOMACH A SILVER BULLET! HA! JUST IMAGINE A ZOMBI HAVING A WEAK STOMACH! ANYWAY, ROY WAS SMART! HE'D EVEN TIPPED OFF HIS MITT TO THE TOWNSFOLK!
LOOK, THIS CABLE THE AMERICAN GAVE ME! IT IS NOT A CABLE AT ALL! IT SAYS: "GENERAL MORENO IS A MASTER ZOMBI-- ALL HIS SERVANTS ARE ZOMBIES!"
WE MUST LOAD OUR GUNS WITH SILVER BULLETS AND GO TO THE CASTLE!
DRINK THIS WINE, MY LOVE-- AS A PLEDGE OF OUR TROTH!
WAIT, GABRIELLE! THAT WINE IS POISONED! MORENO WANTS TO KILL YOU SO HE CAN REVIVE YOU AS A ZOMBI AND MAKE YOU HIS SLAVE FOREVER!
THESE SILVER BULLETS WILL SETTLE YOU, MORENO!
AND THAT GOES FOR YOU AS WELL, CREEP!
-- AND YOU!
--AND YOU!
BUT TO ROY'S HORROR AND AMAZEMENT, NONE OF THE BULLETS TOOK EFFECT! HE WAS INSTANTLY OVERWHELMED!
FLING THE FOOL FROM THE CLIFF! THAT IS THE FATE OF ALL WHO WOULD FOIL MORENO!
AHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!
SO THAT WAS THE END OF ROY GIFFORD! BUT DON'T GO AWAY! WE STILL HAVE OTHER CHARACTERS TO DEAL WITH... AND WHAT CHARACTERS!
CONTINUED ON BACK COVER
50

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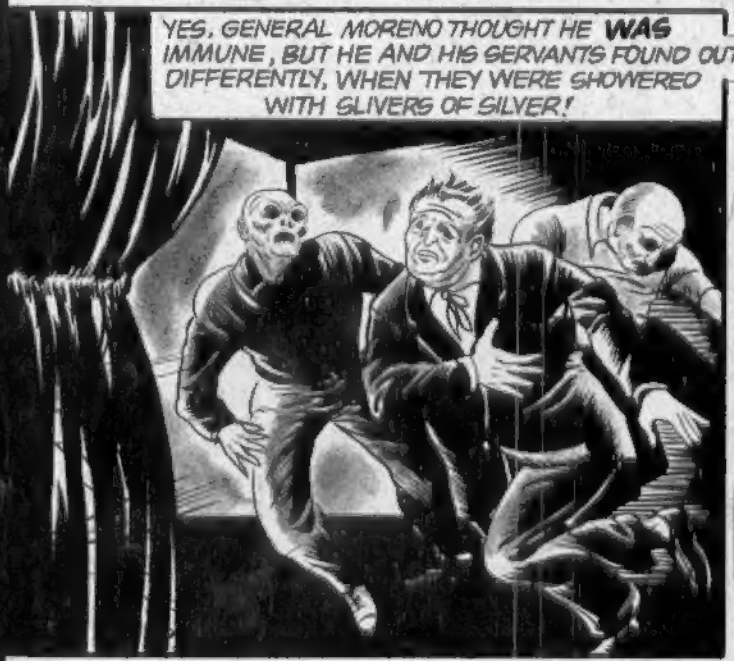
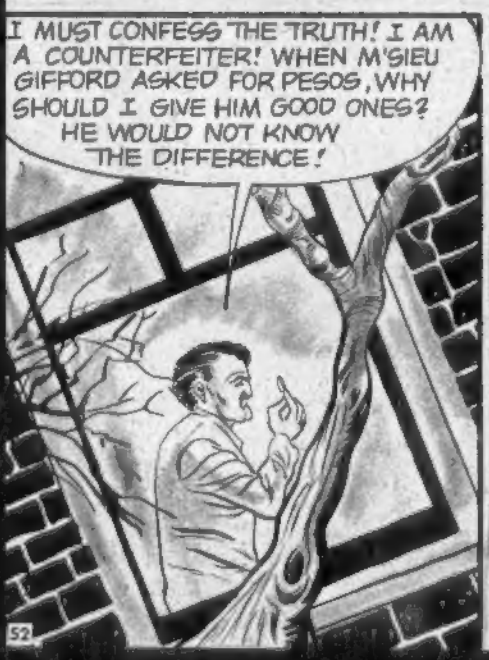
YOU SEE, GABRIELLE! I AM NO ZOMBI! SO DRINK YOUR WINE!
OF COURSE, MON GENERAL!

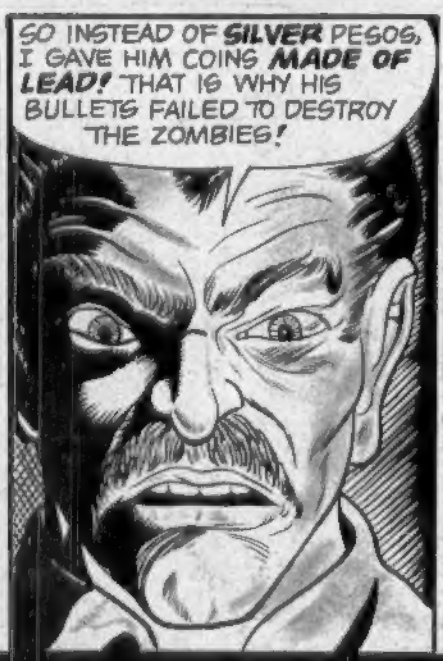
SO GABRIELLE DRANK HER WINE AND PROMPTLY DROPPED DEAD! MORENO DRANK SOME TOO, BUT IT COULDN'T HURT HIM! HE WAS A ZOMBI!!!

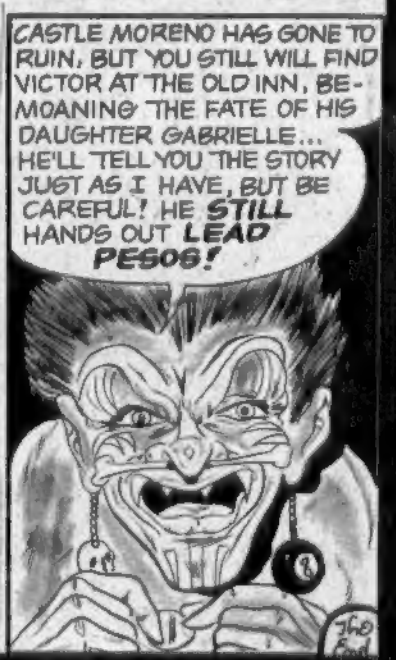
THERE'S MORENO NOW! LET HIM HAVE IT WITH OUR SILVER BULLETS!
FOOLS! EVEN SILVER BULLETS CANNOT HARM A MASTER ZOMBI WHO HAS LIVED A CENTURY AND A HALF, AS I HAVE! I JUST PROVED THAT I AM IMMUNE!


YES, GENERAL MORENO THOUGHT HE WAS IMMUNE, BUT HE AND HIS SERVANTS FOUND OUT DIFFERENTLY, WHEN THEY WERE SHOWERED WITH SLIVERS OF SILVER!

WHAT WAS THE ANSWER TO THIS RIDDLE? WHY WERE MORENO AND HIS MOB RIDDLED -- AFTER THEY HAD BEEN UNHARMED BY ROY'S SHOTS?
LOOK, VICTOR! THE AMERICAN MADE BULLETS FROM THOSE SILVER PESOS -- BUT THEY MUST HAVE FAILED HIM! WHY?
HOW HORRIBLE -- HOW TERRIBLE! IT IS ALL MY FAULT!


I MUST CONFESS THE TRUTH! I AM A COUNTERFEITER! WHEN M'SIEU GIFFORD ASKED FOR PESOS, WHY SHOULD I GIVE HIM GOOD ONES? HE WOULD NOT KNOW THE DIFFERENCE!


SO INSTEAD OF SILVER PESOS, I GAVE HIM COINS MADE OF LEAD! THAT IS WHY HIS BULLETS FAILED TO DESTROY THE ZOMBIES!


CASTLE MORENO HAS GONE TO RUIN, BUT YOU STILL WILL FIND VICTOR AT THE OLD INN, BEMOANING THE FATE OF HIS DAUGHTER GABRIELLE... HE'LL TELL YOU THE STORY JUST AS I HAVE, BUT BE CAREFUL! HE STILL HANDS OUT LEAD PESOS!